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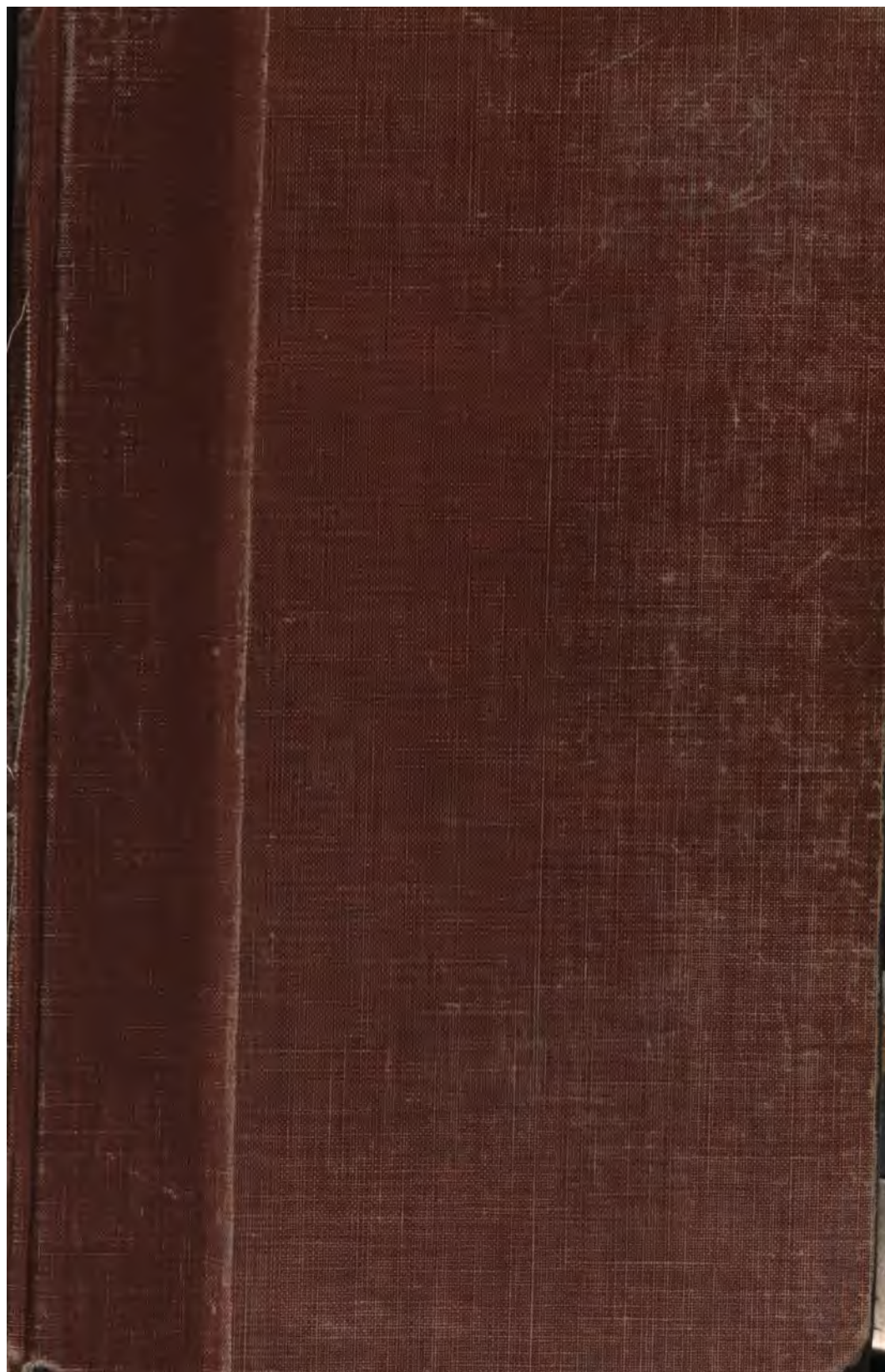
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ARISTOTLE'S THEORY  
OF  
POETRY AND FINE ART

WITH A CRITICAL TEXT AND TRANSLATION

OF  
THE POETICS

BY  
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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE present volume has grown out of certain chapters relating to the *Poetics* in the first edition of 'Some Aspects of the Greek Genius.' These chapters have been enlarged, and partly re-written; and further questions, not touched on in the earlier volume, and bearing on Aristotle's theory of tragedy, are here discussed. A text and a translation of the *Poetics* are prefixed to the Essays.

It is just a hundred years since a critical text of the *Poetics* has been published in Great Britain. Tyrwhitt's edition, which appeared at Oxford in 1794, was, indeed, the work of an admirable scholar; but since that time much light has been thrown on almost every page of this treatise. And yet even to-day, after all the labours of German scholars, no editor can hope to produce a text which will not provoke dissent on the part of competent critics. For my own part, I find myself more frequently in agreement with William Christ on questions of reading, than with any previous

editor. Susemihl, to whom every student of Aristotle is profoundly indebted, appears to me to carry conjecture too far, more especially in the transposition of sentences and the omission of words. On the other hand, Vahlen's adherence to the Parisian MS. (A<sup>c</sup>) borders on superstition,—if one may dare so to speak of the critic who in a pre-eminent degree has contributed to the elucidation of the *Poetics*.

The superiority of the Parisian over all other extant MSS. is beyond dispute; still I cannot share the confidence with which the best editors now speak of it as the sole source from which the rest are derived. It is true there are no decisive passages by which the independent value of these latter can be established. But that some of them have an independent worth is rendered highly probable by two considerations. First, by the appearance in them of words which are omitted in A<sup>c</sup>, but are necessary to complete the sense. The missing words are not unfrequently such as a copyist could hardly have supplied. Secondly, by the number of instances in which the true reading is hopelessly obscured in A<sup>c</sup>, but preserved in some of the so-called 'apographa.' No ordinary scribe could have hit on such happy corrections. While doubting, however, whether A<sup>c</sup> is indeed the archetype of all extant MSS., I have, for the sake of convenience, retained in the critical notes the usual



abbreviation 'apogr.' to denote any MS. or MSS. other than A<sup>c</sup>.

The conjectures of my own which are admitted into the text are few in number. They will be found in iii. 3. 1448 a 33, xix. 3. 1456 b 8, xxiii. 1. 1459 a 17, xxiv. 10. 1460 a 35, xxv. 4. 1460 b 17, xxv. 14. 1461 a 28, xxv. 16. 1461 a 35.<sup>1</sup> The emendation in xxiii. 1, *ἐνὶ μέτρῳ μιμητικῆς* for *ἐν μέτρῳ μιμητικῆς* will, I hope, appear as plausible to others as it is convincing to myself. In ix. 5 (*οὕτω τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόματα*), though I have not altered the traditional reading, yet for reasons stated in note 2, p. 349, I suspect we ought to read *οὐ τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόματα*, and I venture to press this suggestion. In a certain number of passages I have bracketed words, hitherto retained by the editors, which I take to be glosses that have crept into the text. The passages are these—iii. 1. 1448 a 23, vi. 18. 1450 b 13, xvii. 1. 1455 a 27, xvii. 5. 1455 b 22.<sup>2</sup> But the detailed treatment of these and other questions of criticism and interpretation must be reserved for the more fitting pages of a commentary.

Fortunately, the general views of Aristotle on Poetry and Art are not affected by the minor

<sup>1</sup> Of these the conj. in iii. 3 is withdrawn in Ed. 2; that in xxv. 14 gives place to <οἰονοῦν> (Tucker).

<sup>2</sup> In vi. 18 I read in Ed. 2 *τῶν λεγομένων* (Gomperz) instead of [*τῶν μὲν λόγων*], and in xvii. 5 *τίς αὐτὸς* (Bywater) for [*τινὰς αὐτὸς*].

difficulties with which the *Poetics* abounds. Incomplete as our material is when all scattered references have been brought together, the cardinal points of Aristotle's aesthetic theory can be seized with some certainty. But his *Poetics* must be read in the light of his other writings; we must trace the links which connect his theory of Art with his philosophic system as a whole; we must discover the meaning he attaches to 'Imitation' as an aesthetic term,—a somewhat infelicitous term, it must be owned, inherited by him from his predecessors, but henceforth charged with a new meaning. Such an inquiry will dispel the vulgar notion that still survives in popular manuals, that by 'Imitation' Aristotle means a literal copy, a mere facsimile of the world of experience. The clue to his real thought is to be found in the assertion that Poetry is an expression of the 'universal'; that is, of the universal element in human life. In interpreting the full significance of this conception frequent reference will of necessity be made to the wider principles of the Aristotelian philosophy.

In the following pages I have attempted to bring out some of the vital connexions which are thus suggested between Aristotle's theory of Poetry and other sides of his comprehensive thought. In endeavouring to state his views and estimate their worth candidly and without exaggeration, I have

not forgotten that Aristotle, more than any other writer, has suffered from the intemperate admiration of his friends. There have been periods when he was held to be infallible both in literature and in philosophy. A sovereign authority has been claimed for him by those who possessed no first-hand knowledge of his writings, and who certainly were not equipped with sufficient Greek to interpret the text. A far truer respect would have been shown him had it been frankly acknowledged, that in his *Poetics* there are oversights and omissions which cannot be altogether set down to the fragmentary character of the book; that his judgments are based on literary models which, perfect as they are in their kind, do not exhaust the possibilities of literature; that many of his rules are tentative rather than dogmatic; that some of them need revision or qualification; that, for example, the requisites laid down in chap. xiii. for the character of the tragic protagonist would exclude from the first rank of art some of the noblest figures of the Greek drama,—Antigone, Clytemnestra, and possibly Prometheus. On the other hand, we may well wonder at the impartiality of mind, which lifted him above some, at least, of the limitations of his age, though he could not wholly emancipate himself from the external rules and usages of the Athenian theatre. Above all we may admire his insight into the

essential quality of Poetry, as a concrete expression of the universal. To this result he was led by a penetrating analysis of the imaginative creations of Greece itself. Universality is, indeed, their characteristic note. The accidents of human nature seem here to fall into the background, while its larger lineaments are disengaged.

A list of the more important works which treat of the *Poetics* will be found on page xxix. I desire, however, here to mention the books which have chiefly aided me in the preparation of the Essays: E. Müller, *Geschichte der Kunst bei der Alten*, Breslau, 1834. Vahlen, *Beiträge zu Aristoteles' Poetik*, Wien, 1865. Teichmüller, *Aristotelische Forschungen*, Halle, 1869. Reinke, *Aristoteles über Kunst*, Wien, 1870. Döring, *Die Kunstlehre des Aristoteles*, Jena, 1870. Bernays, *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Aristotelische Theorie des Drama*, Berlin, 1880. I owe, moreover, special and personal thanks to Prof. A. C. Bradley for valuable criticisms on my earlier volume, which I have here turned to account. I have reason also gratefully to acknowledge the singular care and skill displayed by Messrs. R. & R. Clark's Reader.

EDINBURGH, *November* 1894.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE chief alterations in this edition, as compared with the first, consist in the enlargement of the Critical Notes and a careful revision of the Translation. Minor changes and additions will be found in the Essays. A third Index also has been added containing a list of the passages in Greek authors referred to in the volume.

In making use of the mass of critical material which has appeared in recent years, especially in Germany, I have found it necessary to observe a strict principle of selection, my aim still being to keep the notes within limited compass. They are not intended to form a complete *Apparatus Criticus*, still less to do duty for a commentary. I trust, however, that no variant or conjectural emendation of much importance has been overlooked.

Of my own conjectures, printed in the text of the first edition, one or two appear to have carried general conviction, in particular that in xxiii. 1.



Two have been withdrawn (see p. vii.). One, which I previously relegated to the notes, while putting in a plea for its acceptance in the preface, has since won the approval of many scholars, including the distinguished names of Professor Susemihl and Professor Tyrrell, and it is with some confidence that I now insert it in the text. I refer to οὐ (οὕτω MSS.) τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόματα in ix. 5. 1451 b 14 (= b 13 Bekk.), where the Arabic has 'names not given at random.' For the copyist's error cf. ix. 2. 1451 a 38 (= a 36 Bekk.), where A<sup>c</sup> has οὕτω, though οὐ τὸ rightly appears in the 'apographa': and for a similar omission of οὐ in A<sup>c</sup> cf. vi. 12. 1450 a 32 (= a 30 Bekk.), οὐ ποιήσει δ ἦν τῆς τραγωδίας ἔργον, the indispensable negative being added in 'apogr.' and found in the Arabic. The emendation not only gives a natural instead of a strained sense to the words τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόματα, but also fits in better with the general context, as I have argued at some length, pp. 367-9 (note).

Another conjecture of my own I have ventured to admit into the text. In the much disputed passage, vi. 8. 1450 a 14 (= a 12 Bekk.), I read <πάντες> ὡς εἰπεῖν for οὐκ ὀλίγοι αὐτῶν ὡς εἰπεῖν of the MSS., following the guidance of Diels and of the Arabic. I regard οὐκ ὀλίγοι αὐτῶν as a gloss which displaced part of the original phrase (see Crit. Notes). As a parallel case I have adduced

*Rhet.* i. 1. 1354 a 12, where οὐδὲν ὥς εἰπεῖν, the reading in the margin of A<sup>c</sup>, ought, I think, to be substituted in the text for the accepted reading ὀλίγον. The word ὀλίγον is a natural gloss on οὐδὲν ὥς εἰπεῖν, but not so οὐδὲν ὥς εἰπεῖν on ὀλίγον.

In two other difficult passages the *Rhetoric* may again be summoned to our aid. In xvii. 1. 1455 a 30 (= a 27 Bekk.) I have (as in the first edition) bracketed τὸν θεατὴν, the object to be supplied with ἐλάνθανεν being, as I take it, the poet, not the audience. This I have now illustrated by another gloss of a precisely similar kind in *Rhet.* i. 2. 1358 a 8, where λανθάνουσίν τε [τοὺς ἀκροατὰς] has long been recognised as the true reading, the suppressed object being not the audience but the rhetoricians.

Once more, in xxiv. 9. 1460 a 26 (= a 23 Bekk.), where A<sup>c</sup> gives the meaningless ἄλλου δέ, I read (as in the first edition) ἀλλ' οὐδέ, following the reviser of A<sup>c</sup>. This reading, which was accepted long ago by Vettori, has been strangely set aside by the chief modern editors, who either adopt a variant ἄλλο δέ or resort to conjecture, with the result that προσθεῖναι at the end of the sentence is forced into impossible meanings. A passage in the *Rhetoric*, i. 2. 1357 a 17 ff., appears to me to determine the question conclusively in favour of ἀλλ' οὐδέ . . . ἀνάγκη . . . προσθεῖναι.

The passage runs thus : ἐὰν γὰρ ἤ τι τούτων γνώριμον, οὐδὲ δεῖ λέγειν· αὐτὸς γὰρ τοῦτο προστίθῃσιν ὁ ἀκροατής, οἷον ὅτι Δωριεὺς στεφανίτην ἀγῶνα νενίκηκεν, ἱκανὸν εἰπεῖν ὅτι Ὀλύμπια γὰρ νενίκηκεν, τὸ δ' ὅτι στεφανίτης τὰ Ὀλύμπια, οὐδὲ δεῖ προσθεῖναι· γινώσκουσι γὰρ πάντες. The general idea is closely parallel to our passage of the *Poetics*, and the expression of it similar even to the word οὐδὲ (where the bare οὐ might have been expected) in the duplicated phrase οὐδὲ δεῖ λέγειν, οὐδὲ δεῖ προσθεῖναι. One difficulty still remains. The subject to εἶναι ἢ γενέσθαι is omitted. To supply it in thought is not, perhaps, impossible, but it is exceedingly harsh, and I have accordingly in this edition accepted Professor Tucker's conjecture, ἀνάγκη <κακείνο> εἶναι ἢ γενέσθαι.

The two conjectures of my own above mentioned are based on or corroborated by the Arabic. I ought to add, that in the Text and Critical Notes generally I have made a freer use than before of the Arabic version (concerning which see p. 4). But it must be remembered that only detached passages, literally rendered into Latin in Professor Margoliouth's *Analecta Orientalia* (D. Nutt, 1887), are as yet accessible to those like myself who are not Arabic scholars; and that even if the whole were before us in a literal translation, it could not safely be used by any one unfamiliar with Syriac and Arabic, 'save with the utmost caution and

subject to the advice of experts. Of the precise value of this version for the criticism of the text, no final estimate can yet be made. But it seems clear that in several passages it carries us back to a Greek original earlier than any of our existing MSS. Two striking instances may here be noted :—

(1) i. 6–7. 1447 a 29 ff., where the Arabic confirms Ueberweg's excision of *ἐποποιία* and the insertion of *ἀνώνυμος* before *τυγχάνουσα*, according to the brilliant conjecture of Bernays (see Margoliouth, *Analecta Orientalia*, p. 47).

(2) xxi. 1. 1457 a 41 (= a 35 Bekk.), where for *μεγαλιωτῶν* of the MSS. Diels has, by the aid of the Arabic, restored the word *Μασσαλιωτῶν*, and added a most ingenious and convincing explanation of *Ἑρμοκαϊκόξανθος* (see Crit. Notes). This emendation is introduced for the first time into the present edition. Professor Margoliouth tells me that Diels' restoration of *ἐπενξάμενος* in this passage is confirmed by the fact that the same word is employed in the Arabic of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* to render *εὔχεσθαι*.

Another result of great importance has been established. In some fifty instances where the Arabic points to a Greek original diverging from the text of A<sup>c</sup>, it confirms the reading found in one or other of the 'apographa,' or conjectures made either at the time of the Renaissance, or in

a more recent period. It would be too long to enumerate the passages here; they will be found noted as they occur. In most of these examples the reading attested by the Arabic commands our undoubting assent. It is, therefore, no longer possible to concede to A° the unique authority claimed for it by Vahlen.

I have consulted by the side of Professor Margoliouth's book various criticisms of it, e.g. by Susemihl in *Berl. Phil. Wochenschr.* 1891, p. 1546, and by Diels in *Sitzungsber. der Berl. Akad.* 1888, p. 49. But I have also enjoyed the special benefit of private communication with Professor Margoliouth himself upon a number of difficulties not dealt with in his *Analecta Orientalia*. He has most generously put his learning at my disposal, and furnished me, where it was possible to do so, with a literal translation. In some instances the Arabic is itself obscure, and throws no light on the difficulty; frequently, however, I have been enabled to indicate in the notes whether the existing text is supported by the Arabic or not.

In the following passages I have in this edition adopted emendations which are suggested or confirmed by the Arabic, but which did not find a place in the first edition:—

ii. 3. 1448 a 15, ὥσπερ οἱ τοὺς

vi. 7. 1450 a 18 (= a 17 Bekk.), <ὁ δὲ βίος>, omitting  
καὶ εὐδαιμονίας καὶ ἡ εὐδαιμονία of the MSS.



- xi. 6. 1452 b 10, [τούτων δὲ . . . εἶρηται]  
 xviii. 6. 1456 a 26 (= a 24 Bekk.), <καὶ> εἰκὸς  
 xx. 5. 1456 b 39 (= b 36 Bekk.), <οὐκ> ἀνευ  
 xxi. 1. 1457 a 38, [καὶ ἀσήμερον]. The literal translation of the Arabic is 'and of this some is compounded of significant and insignificant, only not in so far as it is significant in the noun'  
 xxi. 1. 1457 a 41 (= a 36 Bekk.), Μασσαλιωτῶν (see above, p. xv.)  
 xxv. 17. 1461 b 14, <καὶ ἴσως ἀδύνατον>

I hesitate to add to this list of corroborated conjectures that of Dacier, now admitted into the text of xxiii. 1. 1459 a 24 (= a 21 Bekk.), καὶ μὴ ὁμοίας ιστορίαις τὰς συνθέσεις, for καὶ μὴ ὁμοίας ιστορίας τὰς συνήθεις of the MSS. (In defence of the correction see note, p. 165.) The Arabic, as I learn from Professor Margoliouth, is literally 'and in so far as he does not introduce (or, there do not enter) into these compositions stories which resemble.' This version appears to deviate both from our text and from Dacier's conjecture. There is nothing here to correspond to συνήθεις of the MSS.; on the other hand, though συνθέσεις may in some form have appeared in the Greek original, it is not easy to reconstruct the text which the translation implies. Another conjecture, communicated privately to me by Mr. T. M'Vey, well deserves mention. It involves the simpler change of ὁμοίας to οἷας. The sense then is, 'and must not be like the ordinary histories'; the demonstr.

τοιούτους being sunk in *οἷας*, and, by attraction, *οἶαι ἱστορίαι αἱ συνήθεις* becoming *οἷας ἱστορίας τὰς συνήθεις*.

I subjoin a few other notes derived from correspondence with Professor Margoliouth:—

(α) Passages where the Arabic confirms the reading of the MSS. as against proposed emendation:—

iv. 14. 1449 a 27, *ἐκβαίνοντες τῆς λεκτικῆς ἁρμονίας*: Arabic, 'when we depart from dialectic composition.' (The meaning, however, is obviously misunderstood.)

vi. 18. 1450 b 14 (= b 12 Bekk.), *τῶν μὲν λόγων*: Arabic, 'of the speech.' The *μὲν* is not represented, but, owing to the Syriac form of that particle being identical with the Syriac for the preposition 'of,' it was likely to be omitted here by the translator or copyist.

xviii. 1. 1455 b 28 (= b 25 Bekk.). The Arabic agrees with the MSS. as to the position of *πολλάκις*, 'as for things which are from without and certain things from within sometimes.'

xviii. 5. 1456 a 21 (= a 19 Bekk.), *καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀπλοῖς πράγμασι*: Arabic, 'and in the simple matters.'

xix. 2. 1456 a 41 (= a 38 Bekk.), *τὰ πάθη παρασκευάζειν*: Arabic, 'to prepare the sufferings.'

More doubtful is xvii. 2. 1455 a 33 (= a 30 Bekk.), *ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως*: Arabic, 'in one and the same nature.' The Arabic mode of translation is not decisive as between the MSS. reading and the conjecture *ἀπ' αὐτῆς τῆς φύσεως*, but rather favours the former.

(b) Passages where the conjectural omission of words is apparently supported by the Arabic:—

- ix. 9. 1451 b 34 (= b 31 Bekk.), *οἷα ἂν εἰκὸς γενέσθαι καὶ δυνατὰ γενέσθαι*: Arabic, 'there is nothing to prevent the condition of some things being therein like those which are supposed to be.' But we can hardly say with certainty which of the two phrases the Arabic represents.
- xvi. 4. 1454 b 34 (= b 31 Bekk.), *οἷον Ὀρέστης ἐν τῇ Ἰφιγενείᾳ ἀνεγνώρισεν ὅτι Ὀρέστης*: Arabic, 'as in that which is called Iphigeneia, and that is whereby Iphigeneia argued that it was Orestes.' This seems to point to the omission of the first Ὀρέστης.

In neither of these passages, however, have I altered the MSS. reading.

(c) Passages on which the Arabic throws no light:—

- i. 9. 1447 b 22. The only point of interest that emerges is that in the Arabic rendering ('of all the metres we ought to call him poet') there is no trace of *καὶ*, which is found alike in A° and the 'apographa.'
- x. 3. 1452 a 22 (= a 20 Bekk.). The words *γίγνεσθαι ταῦτα* are simply omitted in the Arabic.
- xxv. 18. 1461 b 20 (= b 17 Bekk.), *ὥστε καὶ αὐτὸν* MSS. The line containing these words is not represented in the Arabic.
- xxv. 19. 1461 b 22 (= b 19 Bekk.), *ὅταν μὴ ἀνάγκης οὔσης μηδὲν . . .* The words in the Arabic are partly obliterated, partly corrupt.

Apart from the revision of the Text, the Translation has, I hope, been improved in many passages,

and the improvements are largely due to the invaluable aid I have received from my friend and colleague, Professor W. R. Hardie. To him I would return my warmest thanks; and also to another friend, Professor Tyrrell, who has read through the proof-sheets of the earlier portion of the volume, and has greatly assisted me by his literary and critical skill.

The Essays are substantially unchanged, though they have undergone revision in detail and some expansion. In the notes to the Essays some new matter will be found, e.g. pp. 142-4 (on ch. i. 6-9), pp. 367-9 (on ch. ix. 4-5), pp. 254-6 (on ch. xiii. 2).

In conclusion, I desire to acknowledge my obligations to friends, such as Mr. B. Bosanquet (whose *History of Aesthetic* ought to be in the hands of all students of the subject), Dr. A. W. Verrall, Mr. W. J. Courthope, Mr. A. O. Prickard, and Rev. W. Lock, who have written me notes on particular points, and to many reviewers by whose criticism I have profited. In a special sense I am indebted to Professor Susemihl for his review of my first edition in the *Berl. Phil. Wochenschr.*, 28th September 1895, as well as for the instruction derived from his numerous articles on the *Poetics*, extending over many years in Bursian's *Jahresbericht* and elsewhere. Among other reviewers to whom I feel grateful, I would mention Mr. Herbert Richards

in the *Classical Review*, May 1895; Mr. R. P. Hardie in *Mind*, vol. iv. No. 15; and the authors of the unsigned articles in the *Saturday Review*, 2nd March 1895, and the *Oxford Magazine*, 12th June 1895.

To Messrs. R. & R. Clark's Reader I would once again express no merely formal thanks.

EDINBURGH, *November* 1897.





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## ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF POETRY AND THE FINE ARTS

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## EDITIONS, TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

THE following is a list of the chief editions and translations of the *Poetics*, and of other writings relating to this treatise, arranged in chronological order :—

Valla (G.), Latin translation. Venice, 1498.

Aldine text, in *Rhetores Graeci*. Venice, Aldus, 1508.

Latin translation, with the summary of Averroes (ob. 1198). Venice, Arrivabene, 1515.

Pazzi (A.) [Paccius], *Aristotelis Poetica, per Alexandrum Paccium, patritium Florentinum, in Latinum conversa*. Venice, Aldus, 1536.

Trincaveli, Greek text. Venice, 1536.

Robortelli (Fr.), *In librum Aristotelis de Arte Poetica explicationes*. Florence, 1548.

Segni (B.), *Rettorica e Poetica d' Aristotele tradotte di Greco in lingua volgare*. Florence, 1549.

Maggi (V.) [Madius], *In Aristotelis librum de Poetica explanationes*. Venice, 1550.

✓ Vettori (P.) [Victorius], *Commentationes in primum librum Aristotelis de Arte Poetarum*. Florence, 1560.

Castelvetro (L.), *Poetica d' Aristotele vulgarizzata*. Vienna, 1570 ; Basle, 1576.

Piccolomini (A.), *Annotazioni nel libro della Poetica d' Aristotele, con la traduzione del medesimo libro in lingua volgare*. Venice, 1575.

Casaubon (I.), edition of Aristotle. Leyden, 1590.

Heinsius (D.) recensuit. Leyden, 1610.

Goulston (T.), Latin translation. London, 1623, and Cambridge, 1696.

Dacier, *La Poétique traduite en Français, avec des remarques critiques*. Paris, 1692.

Batteux, *Les quatres Poétiques d' Aristote, d' Horace, de Vida, de Despréaux, avec les traductions et des remarques par l'Abbé Batteux*. Paris, 1771.



- Winstanley (T.), commentary on *Poetics*. Oxford, 1780.
- Reiz, *De Poetica Liber*. Leipzig, 1786.
- Metastasio (P.), *Estratto dell' Arte Poetica d' Aristotele e considerazioni sulla medesima*. Paris, 1782.
- Twining (T.), *Aristotle's Treatise on Poetry, translated with notes on the translation and on the original, and two dissertations on poetical and musical imitation*. London, 1789.
- Pye (H. J.), *A Commentary illustrating the Poetic of Aristotle by examples taken chiefly from the modern poets. To which is prefixed a new and corrected edition of the translation of the Poetic*. London, 1792.
- Tyrwhitt (T.), *De Poetica Liber. Textum recensuit, versionem refinxit, et animadversionibus illustravit Thomas Tyrwhitt*. Oxford, 1794.
- Buhle (J. T.) recensuit. Göttingen, 1794.
- Hermann (Godfrey), *Ars Poetica cum commentariis*. Leipzig, 1802.
- Gräfenham (E. A. W.), *De Arte Poetica librum denuo recensuit, commentariis illustravit, etc.* Leipzig, 1821.
- Raumer (Fr. v.), *Ueber die Poetik des Aristoteles und sein Verhältniss zu den neuern Dramatikern*. Berlin, 1829.
- Spengel (L.), *Ueber Aristoteles' Poetik in Abhandlungen der Münchener Akad. philos.-philol. Cl. II.* Munich, 1837.
- Ritter (Fr.), *Ad codices antiquos recognitam, latine conversam, commentario illustratam edidit Franciscus Ritter*. Cologne, 1839.
- Egger (M. E.), *Essai sur l'histoire de la Critique chez les Grecs, suivi de la Poétique d'Aristote et d'extraits de ses Problèmes, avec traduction française et commentaire*. Paris, 1849.
- Bernays (Jacob), *Grundzüge der verlorenen Abhandlung des Aristoteles über Wirkung der Tragödie*. Breslau, 1857.
- Saint-Hilaire (J. B.), *Poétique traduite en français et accompagnée de notes perpétuelles*. Paris, 1858.
- Stahr (Adolf), *Aristoteles und die Wirkung der Tragödie*. Berlin, 1859.
- Stahr (Adolf), German translation, with Introduction and notes. Stuttgart, 1860.
- Liepert (J.), *Aristoteles über den Zweck der Kunst*. Passau, 1862.
- Susemihl (F.), German translation, with Introduction and notes. Leipzig, 1865 and 1874.
- Vahlen (J.), *Beiträge zu Aristoteles' Poetik*. Vienna, 1865.
- Spengel (L.), *Aristotelische Studien IV.* Munich, 1866.
- Vahlen (J.) recensuit. Berlin, 1867.
- Teichmüller (G.), *Aristotelische Forschungen. I. Beiträge zur Erklärung der Poetik des Aristoteles. II. Aristoteles' Philosophie der Kunst*. Halle, 1869.
- Ueberweg (F.), German translation and notes. Berlin, 1869.

- Reinkens (J. H.), *Aristoteles über Kunst, besonders über Tragödie*. Vienna, 1870.
- Döring (A.), *Die Kunstlehre des Aristoteles*. Jena, 1870.
- Ueberweg (F.), *Ars Poetica ad fidem potissimum codicis antiquissimi A<sup>c</sup> (Parisiensis 1741)*. Berlin, 1870.
- Bywater (I.), *Aristotelia* in *Journal of Philology*, v. 117 ff. and xiv. 40 ff. London and Cambridge, 1873 and 1885.
- Vahlen (J.) iterum recensuit et adnotatione critica auxit. Berlin, 1874.
- Moore (E.), Vahlen's text with notes. Oxford, 1875.
- Christ (W.) recensuit. Leipzig, 1878 and 1893.
- Bernays (Jacob), *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Aristotelische Theorie des Drama*. Berlin, 1880.
- Brandscheid (F.), Text, German translation, critical notes and commentary. Wiesbaden, 1882.
- Wharton (E. R.), Vahlen's text with English translation. Oxford, 1883.
- Margoliouth (D.), *Analecta Orientalia ad Poeticam Aristoteleam*. London, 1887.
- Bénard (C.), *L'Esthétique d'Aristote*. Paris, 1887.
- Gomperz (T.), *Zu Aristoteles' Poetik*, I. (c. i.-vi.). Vienna, 1888.
- Heidenhain (F.), *Averrois Paraphrasis in librum Poeticæ Aristotelis Jacob Martino interprete*. Leipzig, 1889.
- Prickard (A. O.), *Aristotle on the Art of Poetry. A Lecture with two Appendices*. London, 1891.
- La Poétique d'Aristote, Manuscrit 1741 Fonds Grec de la Bibliothèque Nationale*. Préface de M. Henri Omont. Photolithographie de MM. Lumière. Paris, 1891.
- Carroll (M.), *Aristotle's Poetics in the Light of the Homeric Scholia*. Baltimore, 1895.
- Gomperz (T.), *Aristoteles' Poetik*. Uebersetzt und eingeleitet. Leipzig, 1895.
- Gomperz (T.), *Zu Aristoteles' Poetik*, II., III. Vienna, 1896.



# ARISTOTLE'S POETICS

## ANALYSIS OF CONTENTS

- I. 'Imitation' (*μίμησις*) the common principle of the Arts of Poetry, Music, Dancing, Painting, and Sculpture. These Arts distinguished according to the Medium or material Vehicle, the Objects, and the Manner of Imitation. The Medium of Imitation is Rhythm, Language, and 'Harmony' (or Melody), taken singly or combined.
- II. The Objects of Imitation.

Higher or lower types are represented in all the Imitative Arts. In Poetry this is the basis of the distinction between Tragedy and Comedy.
- III. The Manner of Imitation.

Poetry may be in form either dramatic narrative, pure narrative (including lyric poetry), or pure drama. A digression follows on the name and original home of the Drama.
- IV. The Origin and Development of Poetry.

Psychologically, Poetry may be traced to two causes, the **instinct of Imitation**, and the **instinct of Harmony and Rhythm**.  
**Historically** viewed, Poetry diverged early in two directions: **traces of this twofold tendency are found in the Homeric poems: Tragedy and Comedy exhibit the distinction in a developed form.**  
**The successive steps in the history of Tragedy are enumerated.**
- V. **Definition of the Ludicrous** (*τὸ γελοῖον*), and a brief sketch of the **rise of Comedy**. Points of comparison between Epic Poetry and Tragedy. (The chapter is fragmentary.)

- VI. Definition of Tragedy. Six elements in Tragedy: three external,—namely, Scenic Presentment (*ὁ τῆς δὴς οὐρανοῦ κόσμος* or *ὁ ψῆς*), Lyrical Song (*μελοποιία*), Diction (*λέξις*); three internal,—namely, Plot (*μῦθος*), Character (*ἥθος*), and Thought (*διάνοια*). Plot, or the representation of the action, is of primary importance; Character and Thought come next in order.
- VII. The Plot must be a Whole, complete in itself, and of adequate magnitude.
- VIII. The Plot must be a Unity. Unity of Plot consists not in Unity of Hero, but in Unity of Action.  
The parts must be organically connected.
- IX. (Plot continued.) Dramatic Unity can be attained only by the observance of Poetic as distinct from Historic Truth; for Poetry is an expression of the Universal, History of the Particular. The rule of probable or necessary sequence as applied to the incidents. Certain plots condemned for want of Unity.  
The best Tragic effects depend on the combination of the Inevitable and the Unexpected.
- X. (Plot continued.) Definitions of Simple (*ἀπλοῖ*) and Complex (*πεπλεγμένοι*) Plots.
- XI. (Plot continued.) Sudden Reversal or Recoil of the Action (*περιπέτεια*), Recognition (*ἀναγνώρισις*), and Tragic or disastrous Incident (*πάθος*) defined and explained.
- XII. The 'quantitative parts' (*μέρη κατὰ τὸ ποσό*) of Tragedy defined:—Prologue, Episode, etc. (Probably an interpolation.)
- XIII. (Plot continued.) What constitutes Tragic Action. The change of fortune and the character of the hero as requisite to an ideal Tragedy. The unhappy ending more truly tragic than the 'poetic justice' which is in favour with a popular audience, and belongs rather to Comedy.
- XIV. (Plot continued.) The tragic emotions of pity and fear should spring out of the Plot itself. To produce them by Scenery or Spectacular effect is entirely against the spirit of Tragedy. Examples of Tragic Incidents designed to heighten the emotional effect.
- XV. The element of Character (as the manifestation of moral purpose) in Tragedy. Requisites of ethical portraiture. The rule of necessity or probability applicable to Character as to Plot. The 'Deus ex Machina' (a passage out of place here). How Character is idealised.
- XVI. (Plot continued.) Recognition: its various kinds, with examples.

## XVII. Practical rules for the Tragic Poet :

(1) To place the scene before his eyes, and to act the parts himself in order to enter into vivid sympathy with the *dramatis personae*.

(2) To sketch the bare outline of the action before proceeding to fill in the episodes.

The Episodes of Tragedy are here incidentally contrasted with those of Epic Poetry.

## XVIII. Further rules for the Tragic Poet :

(1) To be careful about the Complication (*δένσις*) and *Dénouement* (*λύσις*) of the Plot ; especially the *Dénouement*.

(2) To unite, if possible, varied forms of poetic excellence.

(3) Not to overcharge a Tragedy with details appropriate to Epic Poetry.

(4) To make the Choral Odes—like the Dialogue—an organic part of the whole.

XIX. Thought (*διδραμα*), or the Intellectual element, and Diction in Tragedy.

Thought may be expressed either by the dramatic speeches—composed according to the rules of Rhetoric—or through the dramatic incidents, which speak for themselves.

Diction falls largely within the domain of the Art of Declamation, rather than of Poetry.

## XX. Diction, or Language in general. An analysis of the parts of speech, and other grammatical details. (Probably interpolated.)

XXI. Poetic Diction. The words and modes of speech admissible in Poetry : including *Metaphor*, in particular.

A passage—probably interpolated—on the Gender of Nouns.

## XXII. (Poetic Diction continued.) How Poetry combines elevation of language with perspicuity.

## XXIII. Epic Poetry. It agrees with Tragedy in Unity of Action : herein contrasted with History.

## XXIV. (Epic Poetry continued.) Further points of agreement with Tragedy. The points of difference are enumerated and illustrated,—namely, (1) the length of the poem ; (2) the metre ; (3) the art of imparting a plausible air to incredible fiction.

## XXV. Critical Objections brought against Poetry, and the principles on which they are to be answered. In particular, an elucidation of the meaning of Poetic Truth, and its difference from common reality.

## XXVI. A general estimate of the comparative worth of Epic Poetry and Tragedy. The alleged defects of Tragedy are not essential to it. Its positive merits entitle it to the higher rank of the two.

## ABBREVIATIONS IN THE CRITICAL NOTES

- A<sup>c</sup> = the Parisian manuscript (1741) of the 11th century: generally, but perhaps too confidently, supposed to be the archetype from which all other extant MSS. directly or indirectly are derived.
- Apogr. = one or more of the MSS. other than A<sup>c</sup>.
- Arabs = the Arabic version of the *Poetics* (Paris 882 A), of the middle of the 10th century, a version independent of our extant MSS. It is not directly taken from the Greek, but is a translation of a Syriac version of the *Poetics* by an unknown author, now lost. (The quotations in the critical notes are from the literal Latin translation of the Arabic, as given in Margoliouth's *Analecta Orientalia*.)
- Σ = the Greek manuscript, far older than A<sup>c</sup> and no longer extant, which was used by the Syriac translator. (This symbol already employed by Susemihl I have taken for the sake of brevity.) It must be remembered, therefore, that the readings ascribed to Σ are those which we *infer* to have existed in the Greek exemplar, from which the Syriac translation was made.
- Ald. = the Aldine edition of *Rhetores Graeci*, published in 1608.
- Vahlen = Vahlen's text of the *Poetics* Ed. 3.
- Vahlen coni. = a conjecture of Vahlen, not admitted by him into the text.
- [ ] = words with manuscript authority (including A<sup>c</sup>), which should be deleted from the text.
- < > = a conjectural supplement to the text.
- \* \* = a lacuna in the text.
- † = words which are corrupt and have not been satisfactorily restored.

**ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΟΥΣ  
ΠΕΡΙ ΠΟΙΗΤΙΚΗΣ**



## ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΟΥΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΠΟΙΗΤΙΚΗΣ

I      Περὶ ποιητικῆς αὐτῆς τε καὶ τῶν εἰδῶν αὐτῆς, ἣν τινα  
 1447<sup>a</sup> δύναμιν ἕκαστον ἔχει, καὶ πῶς δεῖ συνίστασθαι τοὺς μύθους  
 10 εἰ μέλλει καλῶς ἔξειν ἢ ποιήσιν, ἔτι δὲ ἐκ πόσων καὶ  
 ποίων ἐστὶ μορίων, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσα τῆς  
 αὐτῆς ἐστὶ μεθόδου, λέγωμεν ἀρξάμενοι κατὰ φύσιν πρῶ-  
 τον ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων. ἐποποιία δὴ καὶ ἡ τῆς τραγῳδίας 2  
 ποιήσιν ἔτι δὲ κωμῳδία καὶ ἡ διθυραμβοποιητικὴ καὶ τῆς  
 15 αὐλητικῆς ἢ πλείστη καὶ κιθαριστικῆς πᾶσαι τυγχάνουσιν  
 οὔσαι μιμήσεις τὸ σύνολον, διαφέρουσι δὲ ἀλλήλων τρισίν, 3  
 ἢ γὰρ τῷ ἐν ἐτέροις μιμῆσθαι ἢ τῷ ἕτερα ἢ τῷ ἐτέ-  
 ρως καὶ μὴ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον. ὥσπερ γὰρ καὶ χρώμασι 4  
 καὶ σχήμασι πολλὰ μιμούνται τινες ἀπεικάζοντες (οἱ μὲν  
 20 διὰ τέχνης οἱ δὲ διὰ συνηθείας), ἕτεροι δὲ διὰ τῆς φωνῆς,  
 οὕτω καὶ ταῖς εἰρημέναις τέχναις· ἅπασαι μὲν ποιοῦνται  
 τὴν μίμησιν ἐν ῥυθμῷ καὶ λόγῳ καὶ ἁρμονίᾳ, τοῦτοις δ'  
 ἢ χωρὶς ἢ μεμιγμένοις· οἷον ἁρμονία μὲν καὶ ῥυθμῷ χρῶ-

1447 a 9. ἕκαστον apogr.: ἕκαστο N A°. 12. λέγωμεν apogr.: λέγομεν  
 A°: habuit iam Σ var. lect., 'et dicamus et dicimus' Arabs. 17. τῷ  
 ἐν Forchhammer: 'imitatur rebus diversis' Arabs: τῷ γένει A°. 20.  
 φωνῆς: 'per sonos' Arabs: φύσεως Maggi: δι' αὐτῆς τῆς φύσεως Spengel.  
 21. καὶ ἐν apogr.: καὶ A°: καὶ Ald.

## ARISTOTLE'S POETICS

I I propose to treat of Poetry in itself and of its various  
1447 a kinds, noting the essential quality of each; to inquire  
into the structure of the plot as requisite to a good poem;  
into the number and nature of the parts of which a  
poem is composed; and similarly into whatever else falls  
within the same inquiry. Following, then, the order of  
nature, let us begin with the principles which come  
first.

Epic poetry and Tragedy, Comedy also and dithyrambic 2  
poetry, and the music of the flute and of the lyre in  
most of their forms, are all in their general conception  
modes of imitation. They differ, however, from one 3  
another in three respects,—the medium, the objects, the  
manner or mode of imitation, being in each case  
distinct.

For as there are persons who, by conscious art or 4  
mere habit, imitate and represent various objects through  
the medium of colour and form, or again by the voice;  
so in the arts above mentioned, taken as a whole, the  
imitation is produced by rhythm, language, or 'harmony,'  
either singly or combined.

μεναι μόνον ἢ τε αὐλητικὴ καὶ ἡ κιθαριστικὴ κὰν εἴ τις  
 25 ἕτεραι τυγχάνουσιν οὔσαι τοιαῦται τὴν δύναμιν, οἷον ἢ τῶν  
 συρίγγων, αὐτῷ δὲ τῷ ῥυθμῷ [μιμοῦνται] χωρὶς ἀρμονίας 5  
 ἢ τῶν ὀρχηστῶν, καὶ γὰρ οὔτοι διὰ τῶν σχηματιζομένων  
 ῥυθμῶν μιμοῦνται καὶ ἤθη καὶ πάθη καὶ πράξεις· ἢ δὲ 6  
 [ἐποποιία] μόνον τοῖς λόγοις ψιλοῖς ἢ τοῖς μέτροις καὶ τού-  
 1447 b τοις εἴτε μιγνύσα μετ' ἀλλήλων εἶθ' ἐνὶ τινι γένει χρωμένῃ  
 τῶν μέτρων, <ἀνώνυμος> τυγχάνουσα μέχρι τοῦ νῦν· 7  
 10 οὐδὲν γὰρ ἂν ἔχοιμεν ὀνομάσαι κοινὸν τοὺς Σώφρονος καὶ  
 Ξενάρχου μίμους καὶ τοὺς Σωκρατικούς λόγους, οὐδὲ εἴ  
 τις διὰ τριμέτρων ἢ ἐλεγείων ἢ τῶν ἄλλων τινῶν τῶν τοιού-  
 των ποιοῖτο τὴν μίμησιν· πλὴν οἱ ἀνθρωποὶ γε συνάπτοντες  
 τῷ μέτρῳ τὸ ποιεῖν ἐλεγειοποιούς, τοὺς δὲ ἐποποιούς ὀνομά-  
 15 ζουσιν, οὐχ ὥς κατὰ τὴν μίμησιν ποιητὰς ἀλλὰ κοινῇ κατὰ  
 τὸ μέτρον προσαγορεύοντες. καὶ γὰρ ἂν ἱατρικὸν ἢ φυσικὸν 8  
 τι διὰ τῶν μέτρων ἐκφέρωσιν, οὕτω καλεῖν εἰώθασιν· οὐδὲν  
 δὲ κοινὸν ἐστὶν Ὀμήρῳ καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλεῖ πλὴν τὸ μέτρον· διὸ  
 τὸν μὲν ποιητὴν δίκαιον καλεῖν, τὸν δὲ φυσιολόγον μᾶλλον  
 20 ἢ ποιητὴν· ὁμοίως δὲ κὰν εἴ τις ἅπαντα τὰ μέτρα μιγνύων 9  
 ποιοῖτο τὴν μίμησιν καθάπερ Χαιρήμων ἐποίησε Κένταυ-  
 ρον μκτὴν ῥαψῳδίαν ἐξ ἁπάντων τῶν μέτρων, καὶ τοῦτον

25. τυγχάνουσιν apogr.: τυγχάνωσιν A°. τοιαῦται add. apogr.: habuit codex Σ, unde Syrus-Arabs 'aliae artes similes vi.' 26. τῷ αὐτῷ δὲ Σ male (Margoliouth). μιμοῦνται del. Spengel, quod confirmat Arabs. 27. ἡ apogr.: 'ars instrumenti saltationis' Arabs: ol A°: ol <χαριέστεροι> Gomperz: ol <χαριέντες> Zeller. ὀρχηστῶν Σ male (Margoliouth). 29. ἐποποιία seclus. Ueberweg, om. iam Σ. ψιλοῖς ἢ τοῖς μέτροις: ἢ τοῖς ψιλοῖς μέτροις coni. Vahlen. 1447 b 9. ἀνώνυμος add. Bernays, confirmante Arabe 'quae sine nomine est adhuc.' 15. κατὰ τὴν apogr.: τὴν κατὰ A°. 16. φυσικὸν Heinsius: 're physica' Arabs. 'Idem praestat Avarroes' (Margoliouth): μουσικὸν codd. 22. μκτὴν om. Σ: μκτὴν ῥαψῳδίαν delere voluit Tyrwhitt. καὶ τοῦτον apogr.: καὶ A°, Vahlen: καὶ om. Σ: καίτοι Rassow, Gomperz. Loci difficultatem transpositione verborum tollere vult Susseml; 20-22 ὁμοίως δὲ . . . τῶν μέτρων post 12 τοιούτων collocat, commate ad τοιούτων

Thus in the music of the flute and the lyre, 'harmony' and rhythm alone are employed; also in other arts, such as that of the shepherd's pipe, which are essentially similar to these. In dancing, rhythm alone is used without 'harmony'; for even dancing imitates character, emotion, and action, by rhythmical movement. There is another art which imitates by means of language alone, and that either in prose or verse—which  
 1447 b verse, again, may either combine different metres or consist of but one kind—but this has hitherto been without a name.

For there is no common term we could apply to the mimes of Sophron and Xenarchus and the Socratic dialogues on the one hand; and, on the other, to poetic imitations in iambic, elegiac, or any similar metre. People do, indeed, add the word 'maker' or 'poet' to the name of the metre, and speak of elegiac poets, or epic (that is, hexameter) poets, as if it were not the imitation that makes the poet, but the verse that entitles them all indiscriminately to the name. Even when a treatise on medicine or natural science is brought out in verse, the name of poet is by custom given to the author; and yet Homer and Empedocles have nothing in common but the metre, so that it would be right to call the one poet, the other physicist rather than poet. On the same principle, even if a writer in his poetic imitation were to combine all metres, as Chaerephon did in his Centaur, which is a medley composed of metres

ποιητὴν προσαγορευτέον. περὶ μὲν οὖν τούτων διωρίσθω  
 τούτου τὸν τρόπον· εἰσὶ δὲ τινες αἱ πᾶσι χρῶνται τοῖς εἰρη- 10  
 25 μένοις, λέγω δὲ οἷον ῥυθμῷ καὶ μέλει καὶ μέτρῳ, ὥσπερ  
 ἢ τε τῶν διθυραμβικῶν ποιήσεις καὶ ἢ τῶν νόμων καὶ ἢ  
 τε τραγῳδία καὶ ἢ κωμῳδία· διαφέρουσι δὲ ὅτι αἱ μὲν  
 ἅμα πᾶσιν αἱ δὲ κατὰ μέρος. ταύτας μὲν οὖν λέγω τὰς  
 διαφορὰς τῶν τεχνῶν, ἐν οἷς ποιοῦνται τὴν μίμησιν.

II ἐπεὶ δὲ μιμνῶνται οἱ μιμούμενοι πράττοντας, ἀνάγκη δὲ  
 1448 a τούτους ἢ σπουδαίους ἢ φαύλους εἶναι (τὰ γὰρ ἦθῃ σχεδὸν  
 αἰεὶ τούτοις ἀκολουθεῖ μόνοις, κακία γὰρ καὶ ἀρετὴ τὰ ἦθῃ  
 διαφέρουσι πάντες), ἥτοι βελτίονας ἢ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἢ χείρονας  
 5 ἢ καὶ τοιούτους, ὥσπερ οἱ γραφεῖς· Πολύγνωτος μὲν γὰρ  
 κρεῖττους, Παύσων δὲ χείρους, Διονύσιος δὲ ὁμοίους εἵκαζεν·  
 δῆλον δὲ ὅτι καὶ τῶν λεχθεῖσων ἐκάστη μίμησεων ἔξει 2  
 ταύτας τὰς διαφορὰς καὶ ἔσται ἑτέρα τῷ ἑτέρα μιμῆσθαι  
 τούτου τὸν τρόπον. καὶ γὰρ ἐν ὀρχήσει καὶ αὐλήσει καὶ 3  
 10 κιθαρίσει ἔστι γενέσθαι ταύτας τὰς ἀνομοιότητας· καὶ [τὸ]  
 περὶ τοὺς λόγους δὲ καὶ τὴν ψιλομετρίαν, οἷον Ὀμηρος  
 μὲν βελτίους, Κλεοφῶν δὲ ὁμοίους, Ἡγέμων δὲ ὁ Θάσιος ὁ  
 τὰς παρῳδίας ποιήσας πρῶτος καὶ Νικοχάρης ὁ τὴν Δηλι-  
 ᾶδα χείρους· ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ περὶ τοὺς διθυράμβους καὶ περὶ 4  
 15 τοὺς νόμους, ὥσπερ οἱ τοὺς Κύκλωπας Τιμόθεος καὶ Φιλό-

posito, delete 13 ποιοῖτο τὴν μίμησιν et 22 καὶ ποιητὴν: sic efficitur ut  
 verbis φυσιολόγων μᾶλλον ἢ ποιητὴν προσαγορευτέον concludatur locus:  
 οὐκ ἤδη καὶ Ald., Bekker.

24. αἱ Gryph.: αἱ apogr.: αἱ A<sup>c</sup>:  
 'homines qui' Arabs.

26. διθυράμβων apogr.

28. πᾶσαι apogr.

οὐκ apogr.: οὐ A<sup>c</sup>.

29. αἱ Vettori: αἱ A<sup>c</sup>.

1448 a 3. κακία

. . . ἀρετῇ apogr., Σ: κακία . . . ἀρετῇ A<sup>c</sup>.

7. δὴ Morel.

8.

τῷ apogr.: τὸ A<sup>c</sup>.

12. ὁ ante τὰς add. apogr.

13. τραγῳδία ut videtur Σ, 'qui primus faciebat tragoediam' Arabs.

Δελιδά A<sup>c</sup>

pr. man., fort. recte, ut in Iliadis parodia (Tyrrell: cf. Castelvetro).

15.

ὥσπερ οἱ τοὺς coni. Margolionth: ὥσπερ οὕτως Σ ut videtur: ὥσπερ γὰρ

codd.: ὥσπερ Ἀργῆς Castelvetro: ὡς Πέρσεως Vettori: ὥσπερ γὰρ coni.

Vahlen.

of all kinds, we should bring him too under the general term poet. So much then for these distinctions. ✓

There are, again, some arts which employ all the 10 means above mentioned,—namely, rhythm, tune and metra. Such are dithyrambic and nomic poetry, and also Tragedy and Comedy; but between them the difference is, that in the first two cases these means are all employed in combination, in the latter, now one means is employed, now another.

Such, then, are the differences of the arts with respect to the medium of imitation.

II Since the objects of imitation are men in action, and  
1448 a these men must be either of a higher or a lower type — (for moral character mainly answers to these divisions, goodness and badness being the distinguishing marks of moral differences), it follows that we must represent men either as better than in real life, or as worse, or as they are. It is the same in painting. Polygnotus depicted men as nobler than they are, Pauson as less noble, Dionysius drew them true to life.

Now it is evident that each of the modes of imitation 2 above mentioned will exhibit these differences, and become a distinct kind in imitating objects that are thus distinct. Such diversities may be found even in dancing, 3 flute-playing, and lyre-playing. So again in language, whether prose or verse unaccompanied by music. (Homer, for example, makes men better than they are; Cleophon as they are; Hegemon the Thasian, the inventor of parodies, and Nicochares, the author of the Deliad, worse than they are. The same thing holds good of dithyrambs 4 and nomes; here, too, one may portray different types, as

ξενος[, μιμήσαιτο ἄν τις]· ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ δὲ διαφορᾷ καὶ ἡ τραγωδία πρὸς τὴν κωμωδίαν διέστηκεν, ἡ μὲν γὰρ χείρους ἡ δὲ βελτίους μιμείσθαι βούλεται τῶν νῦν.

- III ἔτι δὲ τούτων τρίτη διαφορὰ τὸ ὡς ἕκαστα τούτων  
 20 μιμήσαιτο ἄν τις. καὶ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ μιμείσθαι ἔστιν ὅτε μὲν ἀπαγγέλλοντα (ἡ ἕτερόν τι γιγνώμενον, ὥσπερ Ὅμηρος ποιεῖ, ἡ ὡς τὸν αὐτὸν καὶ μὴ μεταβάλλοντα), ἡ πάντας ὡς πράττοντας καὶ ἐνεργούντας [τοὺς μιμουμένους]. ἐν τρισὶ δὲ ταύταις διαφοραῖς ἡ μίμησις 2  
 25 ἔστιν, ὡς εἵπομεν κατ' ἀρχάς, ἐν οἷς τε καὶ ἃ καὶ ὥς. ὥστε τῇ μὲν ὁ αὐτὸς ἂν εἴη μιμητὴς Ὀμήρῳ Σοφοκλῆς, μιμούνται γὰρ ἄμφω σπουδαίους, τῇ δὲ Ἀριστοφάνει, πράττοντας γὰρ μιμούνται καὶ δρῶντας ἄμφω. ὅθεν καὶ δράματα καλεῖ- 3  
 30 ἀντιποιοῦνται τῆς τε τραγωδίας καὶ τῆς κωμωδίας οἱ Δωριεῖς (τῆς μὲν γὰρ κωμωδίας οἱ Μεγαρεῖς οἷ τε ἐνταῦθα ὡς ἐπὶ τῆς παρ' αὐτοῖς δημοκρατίας γενομένης, καὶ οἱ ἐκ Σικελίας, ἐκείθεν γὰρ ἦν Ἐπίχαρμος ὁ ποιητὴς πολλῷ πρότερος ὢν Χιωνίδου καὶ Μάγνητος, καὶ τῆς τραγωδίας  
 35 ἔνιοι τῶν ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ)· ποιούμενοι τὰ ὀνόματα σημείου· αὐτοὶ μὲν γὰρ κώμας τὰς περιουκίδας καλεῖν φασιν, Ἀθηναίους δὲ δῆμους, ὡς κωμωδοὺς οὐκ ἀπὸ τοῦ κωμάζειν λε-

16. [μιμήσαιτο ἄν τις] secl. con. Vahlen. τῇ αὐτῇ δὲ Vettori: 'in eadem discrepantia' Arabs: ταύτη δὲ τῇ M. Casaubon: αὐτῇ δὲ τῇ codd.  
 18. τῶν νῦν om. ut videtur Σ. 21. ὅτε μὲν . . . γιγνώμενον: <ἡ> ὅτε μὲν ἀπαγγέλλοντα <ὅτε δ'> ἕτερόν τι γιγνώμενον Bywater secutus Gumpesch, recte, ut opinor. Eodem fere pervenit Arabem secutus Margoliouth. τι seclus. Zeller, Spengel. 23. πάντας fort. secludendum (Bywater): πάντα I. Casaubon. τοὺς μιμουμένους seclusi: olim seclus. Vahlen: tuetur Σ. 25. Pro καὶ ἃ καὶ ὥς, ἀναγκαίως Σ (Margoliouth): καὶ ἃ add. apogr. 35. <δ'> ἔνιοι Bywater. 36. αὐτοὶ et Ἀθηναίους Spengel (cf. 1460 b 38): Ἀθηναίους iam editio Oxoniensis 1760: οἱ et ἀθηναῖοι codd.: Ἀθηναῖοι tuentur Wilamowitz, Gompertz.

Timotheus and Philoxenus differed in representing the Cyclopes. The same distinction marks off Tragedy from Comedy; for Comedy aims at representing men as worse, Tragedy as better than in actual life.

III There is still a third difference—the manner in which each of these objects may be imitated. For the medium being the same, and the objects the same, the poet may imitate by narration—in which case he can either take another personality as Homer does, or speak in his own person, unchanged—or he may present all his characters as living and moving before us.

These, then, as we said at the beginning, are the three differences which distinguish artistic imitation,—the medium, the objects, and the manner. So that from one point of view, Sophocles is an imitator of the same kind as Homer—for both imitate higher types of character; from another point of view, of the same kind as Aristophanes—for both imitate persons acting and doing. Hence, some say, the name of 'drama' is given to such poems, as representing action. For the same reason the Dorians claim the invention both of Tragedy and Comedy. The claim to Comedy is put forward by the Megarians,—not only by those of Greece proper, who allege that it originated under their democracy, but also by the Megarians of Sicily, for the poet Epicharmus, who is much earlier than Chionides and Magnes, belonged to that country. Tragedy too is claimed by certain Dorians of the Peloponnese. In each case they appeal to the evidence of language. Villages, they say, are by them called *κῶμαι*, by the Athenians *δῆμοι*: and they assume that Comedians were so named not from *κωμάζειν*, 'to



χθέντας ἀλλὰ τῇ κατὰ κώμας πλάνῃ ἀτιμαζομένους ἐκ  
 1448 b τοῦ ἄσπεως, καὶ τὸ ποιεῖν αὐτοὶ μὲν δρᾶν, Ἀθηναίους δὲ  
 πράττειν προσαγορεύειν. περὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν διαφορῶν 4  
 καὶ πόσαι καὶ τίνες τῆς μιμήσεως εἰρήσθω ταῦτα.

IV εὐόκασι δὲ γεννησθαι μὲν ὅλως τὴν ποιητικὴν αἰτία δύο  
 5 τινὲς καὶ αὗται φυσικαί. τό τε γὰρ μιμῆσθαι σύμφυτον 2  
 τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐκ παίδων ἐστί, καὶ τούτῳ διαφέρουσι  
 τῶν ἄλλων ζῴων ὅτι μιμητικώτατόν ἐστι καὶ τὰς μαθή-  
 σεις ποιεῖται διὰ μιμήσεως τὰς πρώτας, καὶ τὸ χαίρειν  
 τοῖς μιμήμασι πάντας. σημεῖον δὲ τούτου τὸ συμβαίνειν 3  
 10 ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων· ἃ γὰρ αὐτὰ λυπηρῶς ὀρώμεν, τούτων τὰς  
 εἰκόνας τὰς μάλιστα ἡκριβωμένας χαίρομεν θεωροῦντες, οἷον  
 θηρίων τε μορφᾶς τῶν ἀτιμοτάτων καὶ νεκρῶν. αἴτιον δὲ 4  
 καὶ τούτου, ὅτι μαρθάνειν οὐ μόνον τοῖς φιλοσόφοις ἥδιστον  
 ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὁμοίως, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ βραχὺ κοινωνοῦσιν  
 15 αὐτοῦ. διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο χαίρουσι τὰς εἰκόνας ὀρώντες, ὅτι 5  
 συμβαίνει θεωροῦντας μαρθάνειν καὶ συλλογίζεσθαι τί ἕκα-  
 στον, οἷον ὅτι οὗτος ἐκεῖνος, ἐπεὶ ἐὰν μὴ τύχῃ προεωρακώς,  
 οὐχ ἢ μίμημα ποιήσῃ τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἀπερ-  
 γασίαν ἢ τὴν χροιάν ἢ διὰ τοιαύτην τινὰ ἄλλην αἰτίαν.  
 20 κατὰ φύσιν δὲ ὄντος ἡμῖν τοῦ μιμῆσθαι καὶ τῆς ἀρμονίας 6  
 καὶ τοῦ ῥυθμοῦ, τὰ γὰρ μέτρα ὅτι μόρια τῶν ῥυθμῶν  
 ἐστί φανερόν, ἐξ ἀρχῆς πεφυκότες καὶ αὐτὰ μάλιστα κατὰ  
 μικρὸν προάγοντες ἐγέννησαν τὴν ποίησιν ἐκ τῶν αὐτοσχε-

1448 b l. καὶ τὸ ποιεῖν . . . προσαγορεύειν om. Arabs. 4. ὅλως om. Arabs. 5. αὗται apogr.: αὐταὶ A<sup>c</sup>. 13. τούτου apogr.: confirmat Arabs: τοῦτο A<sup>c</sup>: [καὶ τούτου] Zeller: καὶ [τούτου] Spengel: καὶ <λόγος> τούτου Bonitz. 18. οὐχ ἢ Hermann, iam Σ, ut videtur: οὐχὶ codd. τὴν ἡδονὴν om. Arabs. 20. δὴ conl. Vahlen (Beitr.): δὲ codd. 22. καὶ αὐτὰ: πρὸς αὐτὰ Ald., Bekker: εἰς αὐτὰ καὶ Gomperz: καὶ αὐτὰ post μάλιστα traiciendum esse conl. Susemihl.

revel,' but because they wandered from village to village (*κατὰ κώμας*), being excluded contemptuously from the city. They add also that the Dorian word for 'doing' is *δρᾶν*, and the Athenian, *πράττειν*.

This may suffice as to the number and nature of the various modes of imitation.

✓ IV - Poetry in general seems to have sprung from two causes, each of them lying deep in our nature. *First, the 2 meaning*  
 ✓ instinct of imitation is implanted in man from childhood, *the natural*  
*instincts*  
 one difference between him and other animals being that he is the most imitative of living creatures; and through imitation he learns his earliest lessons; and no less universal is the pleasure felt in things imitated. We 3 have evidence of this in the facts of experience. Objects which in themselves we view with pain, we delight to contemplate when reproduced with minute fidelity: such as the forms of the most ignoble animals and of dead bodies. The cause of this again is, that to 4 learn gives the liveliest pleasure, not only to philosophers but to men in general; whose capacity, however, of learning is more limited. Thus the reason why men 5 enjoy seeing a likeness is, that in contemplating it they find themselves learning or inferring, and saying perhaps, 'Ah, that is he.' For if you happen not to have seen the original, the pleasure will be due not to the imitation as such, but to the execution, the colouring, or some such other cause.

① Imitation, then, is one instinct of our nature. ② Next, 6 there is the instinct for 'harmony' and rhythm, metres being manifestly sections of rhythm. Persons, therefore, starting with this natural gift developed by degrees their

διασμάτων. διεσπάσθη δὲ κατὰ τὰ οἰκεία ἤθη ἢ ποιήσις· 7  
 25 οἱ μὲν γὰρ σεμνότεροι τὰς καλὰς ἐμμουνοῦντο πράξεις καὶ  
 τὰς τῶν τοιούτων, οἱ δὲ εὐτελέστεροι τὰς τῶν φαύλων, πρῶ-  
 τον ψόγους ποιοῦντες, ὥσπερ ἄτεροι ὕμνους καὶ ἐγκώμια.  
 τῶν μὲν οὖν πρὸ Ὀμήρου οὐδενὸς ἔχομεν εἰπεῖν τοιούτον 8  
 ποίημα, εἰκὸς δὲ εἶναι πολλούς, ἀπὸ δὲ Ὀμήρου ἀρξαμένοις  
 30 ἔστιν, οἷον ἐκείνου ὁ Μαργίτης καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα. ἐν οἷς καὶ  
 τὸ ἀρμόττον [ιαμβεῖον] ἦλθε μέτρον, διὸ καὶ ιαμβεῖον κα-  
 λεῖται νῦν, ὅτι ἐν τῷ μέτρῳ τούτῳ ἰάμβιζον ἀλλήλους· καὶ 9  
 ἐγένοντο τῶν παλαιῶν οἱ μὲν ἡρωικῶν οἱ δὲ ἰάμβων ποιη-  
 ταί. ὥσπερ δὲ καὶ τὰ σπουδαῖα μάλιστα ποιητῆς Ὀμηρος  
 35 ἦν, μόνος γὰρ οὐχ ὅτι εὖ ἀλλ<α> [ὅτι] καὶ μιμήσεις δραμα-  
 τικὰς ἐποίησεν, οὕτως καὶ τὰ τῆς κωμωδίας σχήματα  
 πρῶτος ὑπέδειξεν, οὐ ψόγον ἀλλὰ τὸ γελοῖον δραματο-  
 ποιήσας· ὁ γὰρ Μαργίτης ἀνάλογον ἔχει, ὥσπερ Ἴλιὰς  
 1449 a καὶ ἡ Ὀδύσσεια πρὸς τὰς τραγωδίας, οὕτω καὶ οὗτος πρὸς  
 τὰς κωμωδίας. παραφανείσης δὲ τῆς τραγωδίας καὶ κω- 10  
 μωδίας οἱ ἐφ' ἐκατέραν τὴν ποιήσιν ὀρμῶντες κατὰ τὴν  
 οἰκείαν φύσιν οἱ μὲν ἀντὶ τῶν ἰάμβων κωμωδοποιοὶ ἐγέ-  
 5 νοντο, οἱ δὲ ἀντὶ τῶν ἐπῶν τραγωδοδιδάσκαλοι διὰ τὸ  
 μείζονα καὶ ἐντιμότερα τὰ σχήματα εἶναι ταῦτα ἐκείνων.  
 τὸ μὲν οὖν ἐπισκοπεῖν εἰ ἄρ' ἔχει ἤδη ἡ τραγωδία τοῖς 11

27. ἄτεροι Spengel: ἕτεροι codd.

Gomperz: καὶ Ald.: κατὰ A°.

30. καὶ τὸ ἀρμόττον [ιαμβεῖον]

31. ιαμβεῖον seclus. Stahr.

35.

Alterum ὅτι seclus. Bonitz, quod ~~comfirm.~~ Arabs.

δραματικὰς A°, Σ:

δραματικῶς apogr.

1449 a. 7.

ἂρ' ἔχει apogr.: παρέχει A°: ἂρ' ἔχει Vahlen.

special aptitudes, till their rude improvisations gave birth to Poetry.

Poetry now diverged in two directions, according to 7 the individual character of the writers. The graver ✓ spirits imitated noble actions, and the actions of good men. The more trivial sort imitated the actions ✓ of meaner persons, at first composing satires, as the former did hymns to the gods and the praises of famous men. A poem of the satirical kind cannot 8 indeed be put down to any author earlier than Homer; though many such writers probably there were. But from Homer onward, instances can be cited,—his own Margites, for example, and other similar compositions. The appropriate metre was also here introduced; hence the measure is still called the iambic or lampooning ✓ measure, being that in which people lampooned one another. Thus the older poets were distinguished as 9 writers of heroic or of lampooning verse.

As, in the serious style, Homer is preeminent among poets, standing alone not only in the excellence, but also in the dramatic form of his imitations, so he too first laid down the main lines of Comedy, by dramatising the ✓ ludicrous instead of writing personal satire. His Margites . . . 1000 . . . bears the same relation to Comedy that the Iliad and Odyssey do to Tragedy. But when Tragedy and Comedy 10 came to light, the two classes of poets still followed their natural bent: the lampooners became writers of Comedy, and the Epic poets were succeeded by Tragedians, since the drama was a larger and higher form of art.

Whether Tragedy has as yet perfected its proper 11

εἶδεν ἱκανῶς ἢ οὐ, αὐτό τε καθ' αὐτὸ κρίνεται ἢ [ναί] καὶ πρὸς τὰ θέατρα, ἄλλος λόγος. γενομένη <δ'> οὖν ἀπ' 12  
 10 ἀρχῆς αὐτοσχεδιαστικῆς, καὶ αὐτὴ καὶ ἡ κωμῳδία, καὶ ἡ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐξαρχόντων τὸν διθύραμβον, ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν τὰ φαλλικά ἃ ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἐν πολλαῖς τῶν πόλεων διαμένει νομιζόμενα, κατὰ μικρὸν ἠϋξήθη προαγόντων ὅσον ἐγγίγνετο φανερόν αὐτῆς, καὶ πολλὰς μεταβολὰς μεταβαλοῦσα ἢ  
 15 τραγωδία ἐπαύσατο, ἐπεὶ ἔσχε τὴν αὐτῆς φύσιν. καὶ τό 13 τε τῶν ὑποκριτῶν πλήθος ἐξ ἑνὸς εἰς δύο πρῶτος Αἰσχύλος ἤγαγε καὶ τὰ τοῦ χοροῦ ἡλάττωσε καὶ τὸν λόγον πρωταγωνιστὴν παρεσκεύασεν, τρεῖς δὲ καὶ σκηνογραφίαν Σοφοκλῆς. ἔτι δὲ τὸ μέγεθος ἐκ μικρῶν μύθων καὶ λέ- 14  
 20 ξεως γελοίας διὰ τὸ ἐκ σατυρικοῦ μεταβαλεῖν ὥψε ἀπεσεμνύθη. τό τε μέτρον ἐκ τετραμέτρου ἱαμβεῖον ἐγένετο· τὸ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον τετραμέτρῳ ἐχρῶντο διὰ τὸ σατυρικὴν καὶ ὀρχηστικωτέραν εἶναι τὴν ποίησιν, λέξεως δὲ γενομένης αὐτὴ ἡ φύσις τὸ οἰκεῖον μέτρον εὔρε, μάλιστα γὰρ λεκτι-  
 25 κὸν τῶν μέτρων τὸ ἱαμβεῖον ἐστίν· σημεῖον δὲ τούτου· πλεῖστα γὰρ ἱαμβεῖα λέγομεν ἐν τῇ διαλέκτῳ τῇ πρὸς ἀλλήλους, ἐξάμετρα δὲ ὀλιγάκις καὶ ἐκβαίνοντες τῆς λεκτικῆς ἁρμονίας. ἔτι δὲ ἐπεισοδίων πλήθη. καὶ τὰ ἄλλ' 15

8. κρίνεται ἢ ναί. | καὶ A<sup>o</sup>: κρίνεται εἶναι καὶ apogr.: κρίναι καὶ Forchhammer: κρίνεται ἢ [ναί.] καὶ Bursian: fort. leg. κρίνεται εἶναι ἢ καί. Habuit Z, ut videtur, αὐτῷ τε κατ' αὐτὸ εἶναι κρείττον ἢ πρὸς θάτερα (Margoliouth). 9. γενομένη οὖν apogr.: γενομένης οὖν A<sup>o</sup>: γενομένη δ' οὖν Bekker.

10. αὐτοσχεδιαστικὴ apogr., Bekker: αὐτοσχεδιαστικῆς A<sup>o</sup>. 11. φαλλικά apogr.: φαυλλικά A<sup>o</sup>: φαυλικά vel φαῦλα Z. 12. διαμένει apogr.: διαμένειν A<sup>o</sup>. 19. λέξεως: 'orationes' Arabs, i.e. λέξεις Z: <ἡ λέξις ἐκ> λέξεως Christ. Omissum vocab. collato Arabe id esse Margoliouth suspic. cuius vice Graeculi ὑψηγορία usurpant. 27. ἐξάμετρα: τετράμετρα Winstanley. eis λεκτικὴν ἁρμονίαν Wecklein (cf. Rhet. iii. 8. 1408 b 32): oodicum lect. tutatur Arabs. Hunc locum 25 σημεῖον—28 ἁρμονίας suadente Usener seclus. Susemihl. 28. Post πλήθη punctum del. Gomperz. ἄλλα ὡς apogr.: ἄλλως A<sup>o</sup>: ἄλλα οἷς Hermann.

types or not; and whether it is to be judged in itself, or in relation also to the audience,—this raises another question. Be that as it may, Tragedy—as also Comedy 12 —was at first mere improvisation. The one originated with the leaders of the dithyramb, the other with those of the phallic songs, which are still in use in many of our cities. [Tragedy advanced by slow degrees; each new element that showed itself was in turn developed. Having passed through many changes, it found its natural form, and there it stopped.]

Aeschylus first introduced a second actor; he dimin- 13  
ished the importance of the Chorus, and assigned the leading part to the dialogue. Sophocles raised the number of actors to three, and added scene-painting. It was not 14  
till late that the short plot was discarded for one of greater compass, and the grotesque diction of the earlier satyric form for the stately manner of Tragedy. The iambic measure then replaced the trochaic tetrameter, which was originally employed when the poetry was of the satyric order, and had greater affinities with dancing. Once dialogue had come in, Nature herself discovered the appropriate measure. For the iambic is, of all measures, ✓  
the most colloquial: we see it in the fact that conversational speech runs into iambic form more frequently than into any other kind of verse; rarely into hexameters, and only when we drop the colloquial intonation. The number of 'episodes' or acts was also increased, and the other embellishments added, of which tradition tells.

ὥς ἕκαστα κοσμηθῆναι λέγεται ἔστω ἡμῖν εἰρημένα.  
30 πολλὸν γὰρ ἂν ἴσως ἔργον εἴη διεξιέναι καθ' ἕκαστον.

V ἡ δὲ κωμῳδία ἐστὶν ὥσπερ εἵπομεν μίμησις φαν-  
λοτέρων μὲν, οὐ μέντοι κατὰ πᾶσαν κακίαν, ἀλλὰ τοῦ  
αἰσχροῦ ἐστὶ τὸ γελοῖον μόριον· τὸ γὰρ γελοῖον ἐστὶν  
ἀμάρτημά τι καὶ αἰσχος ἀνώδυνον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν, οἷον  
35 εὐθύς τὸ γελοῖον πρόσωπον αἰσχρόν τι καὶ διεστραμμένον  
ἄνευ ὀδύνης. αἱ μὲν οὖν τῆς τραγωδίας μεταβάσεις καὶ 2  
δι' ὧν ἐγένοντο οὐ λελήθασιν, ἡ δὲ κωμῳδία διὰ τὸ μὴ  
1449 b σπουδάζεσθαι ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἔλαθεν· καὶ γὰρ χορὸν κωμῳδῶν  
οὐκ ἔποτε ὁ ἄρχων ἔδωκεν, ἀλλ' ἐβελονταὶ ἦσαν. ἤδη δὲ  
σχήματά τινα αὐτῆς ἐχούσης οἱ λεγόμενοι αὐτῆς ποιηταὶ  
μνημονεύονται. τίς δὲ πρόσωπα ἀπέδωκεν ἢ προλόγους 3  
5 ἢ πλήθη ὑποκρίτων καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα, ἡγνύονται. τὸ δὲ  
μύθους ποιεῖν [Ἐπίχαρμος καὶ Φόρμης] τὸ μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς  
ἐκ Σικελίας ἦλθε, τῶν δὲ Ἀθήνησιν Κράτης πρῶτος ἤρξεν  
ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ τῆς ἰαμβικῆς ιδέας καθόλου ποιεῖν λόγους καὶ  
μύθους. ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐποποιία τῇ τραγωδίᾳ μέχρι μὲν τοῦ 4  
10 μετὰ μέτρου [μεγάλου] μίμησις εἶναι σπουδαίων ἡκολού-  
θησεν· τῷ δὲ τὸ μέτρον ἀπλοῦν ἔχειν καὶ ἀπαργελίαν

29. περὶ μὲν οὖν τούτων τσαῦτα add. Ald. ante ἔστω. 32. ἀλλ' ἢ τοῦ αἰσχροῦ Friedreich: ἀλλὰ <κατὰ τὸ γελοῖον, > τοῦ <δ' > αἰσχροῦ Christ: 'sed tantum res ridicula est de genere foedi quae est portio et ridicula' Arabs (Margoliouth), i.e. ἀλλὰ μόνον τὸ γελοῖον ἐστὶ τοῦ αἰσχροῦ δ μόριον ἐστὶ καὶ τὸ γελοῖον Σ (Susemihl), quod ex duabus lect. conflatum esse censet Susemihl (1) ἀλλὰ μόριον μόνον τὸ γελοῖον ἐστὶ τοῦ αἰσχροῦ, (2) ἀλλὰ τοῦ αἰσχροῦ μόριον ἐστὶ καὶ τὸ γελοῖον. 1449 b 3. οἱ λεγόμενοι: ὄλγοι μὲν ol Castelvetro: ὄλγοι μὲν [ol] Usener. 4. προλόγους A: πρόλογον Christ: λόγους Hermann. 6. Ἐπίχαρμος καὶ Φόρμης seclus. Susemihl: <ἐκεῖθεν γὰρ ἦσθη> Ἐπίχαρμος καὶ Φόρμης post ἦλθε Bywater, collato Themistio, Or. xxvii. p. 337 A, recte, ut opinor. 9. μέχρι μόνου μέτρου μεγάλου codd.: μέχρι μὲν τοῦ μετὰ μέτρου Thurot (cf. Arab.): μέχρι μὲν τοῦ μέτρω <ἐν μήκει> μεγάλῳ coni. Susemihl: μέχρι μὲν τοῦ μέτρω Tygwhitt: μέχρι μόνου <τοῦ διὰ λόγου ἐμ> μέτρου μεγάλῳ Ueberweg. 10. Pro μεγάλου codd., μετὰ λόγον Ald. et, ut videtur, M.

These we need not here discuss; to enter into them in 15 detail would, doubtless, be a large undertaking.

V Comedy is, as we have said, an imitation of characters of a lower type,—not, however, in the full sense of the word bad, the Ludicrous being merely a subdivision of the ugly. It consists in some defect or ugliness which is not painful or destructive. To take an obvious example, the comic mask is ugly and distorted, but does not imply pain.

The successive changes through which Tragedy passed, 2 and the authors of these changes, are well known, whereas Comedy has had no history, because it was not at first 1449 b. treated seriously. It was late before the Archon granted a comic chorus to a poet; the performers were till then voluntary. Comedy had already taken definite shape when comic poets, distinctively so called, are heard of. Who introduced masks, or prologues, or increased the 3 number of actors,—these and other similar details remain unknown. As for the plot, it came originally from Sicily; but of Athenian writers Crates was the first who, abandoning the 'iambic' or lampooning form, generalised his themes and plots.

Epic poetry agrees with Tragedy in so far as it is an <sup>it 4</sup> imitation in verse of characters of a higher type. They differ, in that Epic poetry admits but one kind of action, and is narrative in form. They differ, again, in 'Diction'



εἶναι, ταύτῃ διαφέρουσιν· ἔτι δὲ τῷ μήκει, <ἐπεὶ> ἡ μὲν  
 ὅτι μάλιστα πειράτῃ ὑπὸ μίαν περίοδον ἡλίου εἶναι ἢ  
 μικρὸν ἐξαλλάττειν, ἡ δὲ ἐποποιία ἀόριστος τῷ χρόνῳ,  
 15 καὶ τούτῳ διαφέρει· καίτοι τὸ πρῶτον ὁμοίως ἐν ταῖς  
 τραγῳδαίαις τοῦτο ἐποιοῦν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἔπεσιν. μέρη δ' 5  
 ἐστὶ τὰ μὲν ταυτά, τὰ δὲ ἴδια τῆς τραγῳδίας. διόπερ  
 ὅστις περὶ τραγῳδίας οἶδε σπουδαίας καὶ φαύλης,  
 οἶδε καὶ περὶ ἐπῶν· ἃ μὲν γὰρ ἐποποιία ἔχει,  
 20 ὑπάρχει τῇ τραγῳδίᾳ, ἃ δὲ αὐτῇ, οὐ πάντα ἐν τῇ  
 ἐποποιίᾳ.

VI περὶ οὖν τῆς ἐν ἐξαμέτροις μιμητικῆς καὶ περὶ  
 κωμῳδίας ὕστερον ἐροῦμεν, περὶ δὲ τραγῳδίας λέγωμεν  
 ἀναλαμβάνοντες αὐτῆς ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων τὸν γινόμενον ὅρον  
 25 τῆς οὐσίας. ἔστιν οὖν τραγῳδία μίμησις πράξεως σπου- 2  
 δαίας καὶ τελείας μέγεθος ἐχούσης, ἡδυσμένη λόγῳ χωρὶς  
 ἐκάστῳ τῶν εἰδῶν ἐν τοῖς μορίοις, δρώντων καὶ οὐ δι'  
 ἀπαγγελίας, δι' ἐλέου καὶ φόβου <sup>ἡδυσμένη</sup>περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν  
 τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν. λέγω δὲ ἡδυσμένον μὲν 3  
 30 λόγον τὸν ἔχοντα ῥυθμὸν καὶ ἁρμονίαν καὶ μέλος, τὸ δὲ  
 χωρὶς τοῖς εἵδεσι τὸ διὰ μέτρων ἔνια μόνον περαίνεσθαι  
 καὶ πάλιν ἕτερα διὰ μέλους. ἢ ἐπεὶ δὲ πράττοντες ποιοῦν- 4  
 ται τὴν μίμησιν, πρῶτον μὲν ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἂν εἴη τι μῶριον  
 τραγῳδίας ὅ τῆς ὀψέως κόσμος, εἴτα μελοποιία καὶ λέξις,  
 35 ἐν τούτοις γὰρ ποιοῦνται τὴν μίμησιν. λέγω δὲ λέξις

12. διαφέρει Hermann, confirmat Arabs.

<ἐπεὶ> ἡ μὲν Gomperz :

<ῆ> ἡ μὲν coni. Vahlen : ἡ μὲν γὰρ apogr.

15. διαφέρουσιν Christ.

16. ἔπεσιν et ἀπασι var. lect. Σ (Diels), 'in omnibus epesi' Arabs.

ἢ αὐτῇ A° : αὐτῇ apogr. : αὐτῇ Reiz.

24. ἀναλαμβάνοντες Bernays :

9. μᾶλλον codd.

27. ἐκάστῳ Tyrwhitt : ἐκάστου codd.

29.

Arab. ἵτων corr. apogr., habuit iam Σ : μαθημάτων A°.

30. μέλος :

μὲν τοῦ ἑττορι : καὶ μέλος seclus. Tyrwhitt.

31. μόνον : μόρια Σ

Ueberweg (Arabs).

*diff. in 1st. & 2nd. parts. 2nd.*

length of the action: for Tragedy endeavours, as far as possible, to confine itself to a single revolution of the sun, or but slightly to exceed this limit; whereas the Epic action has no limits of time. This, then, is a second point of difference; though at first the same freedom was admitted in Tragedy as in Epic poetry.

Of their constituent parts some are common to both, some peculiar to Tragedy. Whoever, therefore, knows what is good or bad Tragedy, knows also about Epic poetry: for all the elements of an Epic poem are found in Tragedy, but the elements of a Tragedy are not all found in the Epic poem.

VI Of the poetry which imitates in hexameter verse, and of Comedy, we will speak hereafter. Let us now discuss Tragedy, resuming its formal definition, as resulting from what has been already said.

Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is 2 serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions. . By 3 'language embellished,' I mean language into which rhythm, 'harmony,' and song enter. By 'the several kinds in separate parts,' I mean, that some parts are rendered through the medium of verse alone, others again with the aid of song.

Now as tragic imitation implies persons acting, it 4 necessarily follows, in the first place, that Scenic equipment will be a part of Tragedy. Next, Song and Diction, for these are the medium of imitation. By 'Diction'

μὲν αὐτὴν τὴν τῶν μέτρων σύνθεσιν, μελοποιῶν δὲ ὁ  
 τὴν δύναμιν φανεράν ἔχει πᾶσιν. ἐπεὶ δὲ πράξεως ἐστὶ 5  
 μίμησις, πράττεται δὲ ὑπὸ τινῶν πραττόντων, οὗς ἀνάγκη  
 ποιούς τινας εἶναι κατὰ τε τὸ ἦθος καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν  
 1450 a (διὰ γὰρ τούτων καὶ τὰς πράξεις εἶναι φαμεν ποιὰς  
 τινας, πέφυκεν δὲ αἰτίας δύο τῶν πράξεων εἶναι,  
 διάνοιαν καὶ ἦθος, καὶ κατὰ ταύτας καὶ τυγχάνουσι  
 καὶ ἀποτυγχάνουσι πάντες), ἔστιν δὲ τῆς μὲν πράξεως 6  
 5 ὁ μῦθος ἢ μίμησις· λέγω γὰρ μῦθον τοῦτον τὴν σύνθεσιν  
 τῶν πραγμάτων, τὰ δὲ ἦθη, καθ' ὃ ποιούς τινας εἶναι  
 φαμεν τοὺς πράττοντας, διάνοιαν δέ, ἐν ὅσοις λέγοντες  
 ἀποδεικνύασιν τι ἢ καὶ ἀποφαίνονται γνώμην. ἀνάγκη 7  
 οὖν πάσης τραγωδίας μέρη εἶναι ἕξ, καθ' ἃ ποιὰ τις  
 10 ἐστὶν ἢ τραγωδία· ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶ μῦθος καὶ ἦθη καὶ  
 λέξεις καὶ διάνοια καὶ ὄψεις καὶ μελοποιία. οἷς μὲν  
 γὰρ μιμοῦνται, δύο μέρη ἐστίν, ὡς δὲ μιμοῦνται, ἓν, ἃ  
 δὲ μιμοῦνται, τρία, καὶ παρὰ ταῦτα οὐδέν. τούτοις μὲν 8  
 οὖν <πάντες> ὡς εἰπεῖν κέχρηται τοῖς εἰδεσιν· καὶ γὰρ  
 15 ὄψεις ἔχει πᾶν καὶ ἦθος καὶ μῦθον καὶ λέξιν καὶ μέλος  
 καὶ διάνοιαν ὡσαύτως. μέγιστον δὲ τούτων ἐστὶν ἢ τῶν 9

36. μέτρων: ὀνομάτων Hermann, collato 1450 b 16. 37. πᾶσιν Maggi:  
 πᾶσαν codd. 40. διὰ δὲ Zeller. διὰ γὰρ τούτων . . . πάντες in  
 parenthesi Thurot. 1450 a 2. πέφυκεν δὲ apogr.: πέφυκεν A<sup>c</sup>.  
 αἰτίας Christ: αἰτια codd. καὶ κατὰ . . . πάντες nescio an post ποιὰς  
 τινας transponere praestet (Christ). 4. δὴ Eucken: δὲ codd. 5.  
 τούτων: τοῦτο Maggi: seclus. Christ (cf. Arab.). 6. καθὸ A<sup>c</sup>: καθ' ἃ  
 apogr. 9. καθοποία A<sup>c</sup>: καθ' ἃ ποιὰ apogr. 14. οὐκ ὀλίγοι αὐτῶν  
 ὡς εἰπεῖν codd.: ὀλίγοι αὐτῶν <ἅπαντες> ὡς εἰπεῖν Bywater: οὐκ ὀλίγοι  
 αὐτῶν <ἀλλὰ πάντες> ὡς εἰπεῖν Bursian: οὐκ ὀλίγοι αὐτῶν om. Σ, sed  
 πάντως (? = πάντες) add. Σ (vid. Margoliouth). Deleto igitur tanquam  
 gloss. οὐκ ὀλίγοι αὐτῶν, scripsi <πάντες> ὡς εἰπεῖν: cf. Rhet. i. 1. 1354 a  
 12, ὀλίγον codd., οὐδὲν ὡς εἰπεῖν A<sup>c</sup> in marg., ubi ὀλίγον glossema esse  
 suspicor, veram lect. οὐδὲν ὡς εἰπεῖν. Viam monstravit Diels, qui tamen  
 πάντες quoque omisso, τούτοις μὲν οὖν ὡς εἰπεῖν scripsit: οὐκ ὀλίγοι αὐτῶν  
 <ἀλλ' ἐν πᾶσι πάντες> Gomperz: οὐκ ὀλίγοι αὐτῶν <ἀλλὰ πάντες πάντες>  
 Zeller: <πάντες ἐν πᾶσι αὐτῆς> Susemihl. 15. πᾶν iure suspexit.

I mean the mere metrical arrangement of the words: as for 'Song,' it is a term whose sense every one understands.

Again, Tragedy is the imitation of an action; and an action implies personal agents, who necessarily possess certain distinctive qualities both of character and thought.

It is these that determine the qualities of actions themselves; these—thought and character—are the two natural causes from which actions spring: on these causes, again, all success or failure depends. Hence, the Plot is the imitation of the action:—for by plot I here mean the arrangement of the incidents. By Character I mean that in virtue of which we ascribe certain qualities to the agents. Thought is required wherever a statement is proved, or, it may be, a general truth enunciated. Every Tragedy, therefore, must have six parts, which parts determine its quality—namely, Plot, Character, Diction, Thought, Scenery, Song. Two of the parts constitute the medium of imitation, one the manner, and three the objects of imitation. And these complete the list. These elements have been employed, we may say, by the poets to a man; in fact, every play contains Scenic accessories as well as Character, Plot, Diction, Song, and Thought.

But most important of all is the structure of the

Parts  
by  
Thought

- πραγμάτων σύστασις· ἡ γὰρ τραγῳδία μίμησις ἐστίν  
οὐκ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλὰ πράξεως καὶ βίου· <ὁ δὲ βίος> ἐν  
πράξει ἐστίν καὶ τὸ τέλος πράξις τις ἐστίν, οὐ ποιότης·
- 20 εἰσὶν δὲ κατὰ μὲν τὰ ἦθη ποιοῖ τινες, κατὰ δὲ τὰς 10  
πράξεις εὐδαίμονες ἢ τούναντίον. οὐκ οὖν ὅπως τὰ ἦθη  
μιμήσονται πράττουσιν, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἦθη συμπααραλαμβάνου-  
σιν διὰ τὰς πράξεις· ὥστε τὰ πράγματα καὶ ὁ μῦθος  
τέλος τῆς τραγῳδίας, τὸ δὲ τέλος μέγιστον ἀπάντων.
- 25 ἔτι ἄνευ μὲν πράξεως οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο τραγῳδία, ἄνευ 11  
δὲ ἡθῶν γένοιτ' ἂν. αἱ γὰρ τῶν νέων τῶν πλείστων  
ἀήθεις τραγῳδαί εἰσὶν καὶ ὅλως ποιηταὶ πολλοὶ τοιοῦτοι,  
οἷον καὶ τῶν γραφῶν Ζεῦξις πρὸς Πολύγνωτον πέπον-  
θεν· ὁ μὲν γὰρ Πολύγνωτος ἀγαθὸς ἠθογράφος, ἡ δὲ
- 30 Ζεύξιδος γραφή οὐδὲν ἔχει ἠθος. ἔτι ἐάν τις ἐφέξῃς 12  
θῇ ῥήσεις ἠθικὰς καὶ λέξει καὶ διανοίᾳ εὖ πεποιημένας,  
οὐ ποιήσει δ' ἦν τῆς τραγῳδίας ἔργον, ἀλλὰ πολὺ  
μᾶλλον ἢ καταδεεστέροις τούτοις κεχρημένη τραγῳδία,  
ἔχουσα δὲ μῦθον καὶ σύστασιν πραγμάτων. πρὸς 13
- 35 δὲ τούτοις τὰ μέγιστα οἷς ψυχαγωγεῖ ἡ τραγῳδία,  
τοῦ μύθου μέρη ἐστίν, αἳ τε περιπέτεια καὶ ἀνα-  
γνωρίσεις. ἔτι σημείον ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἐγχειροῦντες ποιεῖν 14  
πρότερον δύνανται τῇ λέξει καὶ τοῖς ἡθεσιν ἀκριβοῦν  
ἢ τὰ πράγματα συνιστάναι, οἷον καὶ οἱ πρῶτοι ποιηταὶ
- 40 σχεδὸν ἅπαντες. ἀρχὴ μὲν οὖν καὶ οἷον ψυχὴ ὁ μῦθος
18. ἀλλὰ πράξεως καὶ βίου καὶ εὐδαιμονίας καὶ ἡ κακοδαιμονία ἐν πράξει codd.,  
sed alio spectat Arabs ('sed in operibus et vita. Et <vita> est in  
opere'); unde Margoliouth ἀλλὰ πράξεως καὶ βίου, <ὁ δὲ βίος> ἐν πράξει,  
quod probant Diels, Zeller, Susemihl. Codicum lect. ita supplet Vahlen,  
καὶ εὐδαιμονίας <καὶ κακοδαιμονίας, ἡ δὲ εὐδαιμονία> καὶ ἡ κακοδαιμονία.
22. πράττουσιν: πράττοντας ποιοῦσιν coni. Vahlen. συμπααραλαμβάνουσι  
Guelf.: συμπααραλαμβάνουσι Spengel: συμπεριλαμβάνουσι Δ°. 29.  
ἀγαθῶν Ald. 31. λέξει καὶ διανοίᾳ Vahlen: habuit iam Σ: λέξεις καὶ  
διανοίας codd. 32. οὐ add. apogr.: 'nequaquam' Arabs: fort. οὐ-  
δαμῶς Margoliouth. 39. συνιστάναι Thurot: συνιστάσθαι codd.

incidents. ! For Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality. Now 10 character determines men's qualities, but it is by their actions that they are happy or the reverse. Dramatic action, therefore, is not with a view to the representation of character: character comes in as subsidiary to the action. Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of a tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all. Again, 11 without action there cannot be a tragedy; there may be without character. ; The tragedies of most of our modern poets fail in the rendering of character; and of poets in general this is often true. It is the same in painting; and here lies the difference between Zeuxis and Polygnotus. Polygnotus delineates character well: the style of Zeuxis is devoid of ethical quality. Again, if you string 12 together a set of speeches expressive of character, and well finished in point of diction and thought, you will not produce the essential tragic effect nearly so well as with a play which, however deficient in these respects, yet has a plot and artistically constructed incidents. Besides which, the most powerful elements of emotional 13 interest in Tragedy—Reversal or Recoil of the Action, and Recognition scenes—are parts of the plot. A further 14 proof is, that novices in the art attain to finish of diction and precision of portraiture before they can construct the plot. It is the same with almost all the early poets.

The Plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were,

τῆς τραγωδίας, δεύτερον δὲ τὰ ἦθη. παραπλήσιον γάρ 15  
 1450 b ἔστιν καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γραφικῆς· εἰ γὰρ τις ἐναλείψει τοῖς  
 καλλίστοις φαρμάκοις <sup>καὶ</sup> χυδῆν, οὐκ ἂν ὁμοίως εὐφράνειεν  
 καὶ λευκογραφήσας εἰκόνα. ἔστιν τε μέμησις πράξεως  
 καὶ διὰ ταύτην μάλιστα τῶν πραττόντων. τρίτον δὲ ἡ  
 5 διάνοια. τοῦτο δὲ ἔστιν τὸ λέγειν δύνασθαι τὰ ἐνόντα 16  
 καὶ τὰ ἀρμόττοντα, ὅπερ ἐπὶ τῶν λόγων τῆς πολιτικῆς  
 καὶ ῥητορικῆς ἔργον ἐστίν· οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἀρχαῖοι πολι-  
 τικῶς ἐποιοῦν λέγοντας, οἱ δὲ νῦν ῥητορικῶς. ἔστιν δὲ 17  
 ἦθος μὲν τὸ τοιοῦτον δὲ δηλοῖ τὴν προαίρεσιν ὅποιά τις  
 10 [προ]αίρεται ἢ φεύγει· διόπερ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἦθος τῶν  
 λόγων ἐν οἷς οὐκ ἔστι δῆλον ἢ ἐν οἷς μὴδ' ὅλως ἔστιν  
 ὃ τι [προ]αίρεται ἢ φεύγει ὁ λέγων. διάνοια δέ, ἐν  
 οἷς ἀποδεικνύουσί τι ὥς ἔστιν ἢ ὥς οὐκ ἔστιν ἢ καθόλου  
 τι ἀποφαίνονται. τέταρτον δὲ τῶν λεγομένων ἢ λέξεις· 18  
 15 λέγω δέ, ὥσπερ πρότερον εἴρηται, λέξιν εἶναι τὴν διὰ  
 τῆς ὀνομασίας ἐρμηνείαν, δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐμμέτρων καὶ  
 ἐπὶ τῶν λόγων ἔχει τὴν αὐτὴν δύναμιν. τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν 19  
 [πέντε] ἢ μελοποιία μέγιστον τῶν ἡδυσμάτων, ἢ δὲ ὄψις  
 ψυχαγωγικὸν μὲν, ἀτεχνότατον δὲ καὶ ἡκιστα οἰκείον  
 20 τῆς ποιητικῆς· <ῖσ>ως γὰρ τῆς τραγωδίας δύναμις καὶ  
 ἄνευ ἀγῶνος καὶ ὑποκριτῶν ἔστιν, ἔτι δὲ κυριωτέρα περὶ

41. παραπλήσιον . . . εἰκόνα *supra* collocavit post πραγμάτων v. 34 Castel-  
 vetro. 1450 b 3. *te* codd.: γὰρ Hermann. 6. ἐπὶ τῶν λόγων *secl.*  
 M. Schmidt. 9. ὅποιά τις ἐν οἷς οὐκ ἔστι δῆλον ἢ προαίρεται ἢ φεύγει·  
 διόπερ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἦθος τῶν λόγων ἐν οἷς μὴδ' ὅλως ἔστιν ὃ τις (ὃ τι *apogr.*)  
 προαίρεται ἢ φεύγει ὁ λέγων *A<sup>o</sup>*. *Lectio* in *textu* receptam dedit  
 Gomperz, alios secutus (cf. Christ). *Deerant* in *Σ* ἐν οἷς οὐκ ἔστι δῆλον ἢ  
 προαίρεται ἢ φεύγει, unde *coni.* Margoliouth δ δηλοῖ τὴν προαίρεσιν, ὅποιά  
 τις: *omissis* *verbis* ἐν οἷς . . . φεύγει. *Susp.* *Susemihl* ἐν οἷς οὐκ ἔστι . . .  
 ἢ φεύγει *et* ἐν οἷς μὴδ' ὅλως ἔστιν . . . ἢ φεύγει *var.* *lect.* *esse.* 12. ὃ τι  
*apogr.*: ὃ τις *A<sup>o</sup>*. 14. τῶν λεγομένων Gomperz: τῶν μὲν λόγων *codd.*  
*quod* *aut* *corrigendum* *aut* *delendum* *esse* *censeo.* 18. πέντε *A<sup>o</sup>*:  
*seclus.* Spengel: *om.* iam *Σ*: πέμπτων *apogr.* 20. ῖσως Meiser: ὅλως  
 Gomperz: ὥς *A<sup>o</sup>*: ἢ *apogr.*

the soul of a tragedy: Character holds the second place.

1450 A similar fact is seen in painting. The most beautiful 15  
colours, laid on confusedly, will not give as much pleasure  
as the chalk outline of a portrait. Thus Tragedy is the  
imitation of an action, and of the agents, mainly with a  
view to the action.

Third in order is Thought,—that is, the faculty of 16  
saying what is possible and pertinent in given circum-  
stances. In the case of oratory, this is the function of  
the political art and of the art of rhetoric: and so indeed  
the older poets make their characters speak the language  
of civic life; the poets of our time, the language of the  
rhetoricians. Character is that which reveals moral 17  
purpose, showing what kind of things a man chooses or  
avoids. Speeches, therefore, which do not make this  
manifest, or in which the speaker does not choose or  
avoid anything whatever, are not expressive of character.)  
(Thought, on the other hand, is found where something is  
proved to be or not to be, or a general maxim is  
enunciated.)

Fourth among the elements enumerated comes 18  
Diction; by which I mean, as has been already said, the  
expression of our meaning in words; and its essence is  
the same both in verse and prose.

Of the remaining elements Song holds the chief place 19  
among the embellishments.

Scenery has, indeed, an emotional attraction of its  
own, but, of all the parts, it is the least artistic, and  
connected least with the art of poetry. For the power  
of Tragedy, we may be sure, is felt even apart from  
representation and actors. Besides, the production of



τὴν ἀπεργασίαν τῶν ὄψεων ἢ τοῦ σκευοποιοῦ τέχνη τῆς  
τῶν ποιητῶν ἐστίν.

VII διωρισμένων δὲ τούτων, λέγωμεν μετὰ ταῦτα ποίαν  
25 τινὰ δεῖ τὴν σύστασιν εἶναι τῶν πραγμάτων, ἐπειδὴ  
τοῦτο καὶ πρῶτον καὶ μέγιστον τῆς τραγωδίας ἐστίν.  
κεῖται δὴ ἡμῖν τὴν τραγωδίαν τελείας καὶ ὅλης πράξεως 2  
εἶναι μίμησιν ἐχούσης τι μέγεθος· ἐστὶν γὰρ ὅλον καὶ  
μηδὲν ἔχον μέγεθος. ὅλον δὲ ἐστὶν τὸ ἔχον ἀρχὴν καὶ 3  
30 μέσον καὶ τελευτήν. ἀρχὴ δὲ ἐστὶν ὃ αὐτὸ μὲν μὴ ἐξ  
ἀνάγκης μετ' ἄλλο ἐστίν, μετ' ἐκείνο δ' ἕτερον πέφυκεν  
εἶναι ἢ γίνεσθαι, τελευτὴ δὲ τούναντίον ὃ αὐτὸ μετ'  
ἄλλο πέφυκεν εἶναι ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἢ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ,  
μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο ἄλλο οὐδέν, μέσον δὲ ὃ καὶ αὐτὸ μετ'  
35 ἄλλο καὶ μετ' ἐκείνο ἕτερον. δεῖ ἄρα τοὺς συνεστῶτας  
εἰς μύθους μὴθ' ὀπόθεν ἔτυχεν ἄρχεσθαι μὴθ' ὅπου  
ἔτυχε τελευτᾶν, ἀλλὰ κεχρησθαι ταῖς εἰρημέναις ἰδέαις.  
ἔτι δ' ἐπεὶ τὸ καλὸν καὶ ζῶον καὶ ἅπαν πρᾶγμα ὃ 4  
συνέστηκεν ἐκ τινῶν οὐ μόνον ταῦτα τεταγμένα δεῖ  
40 ἔχειν ἀλλὰ καὶ μέγεθος ὑπάρχειν μὴ τὸ τυχόν· τὸ γὰρ  
καλὸν ἐν μεγέθει καὶ τάξει ἐστίν, διὸ οὔτε πάμμικρον  
ἂν τι γένοιτο καλὸν ζῶον, συγγεῖται γὰρ ἡ θεωρία  
ἐγγὺς τοῦ ἀναισθήτου χρόνου γινομένη, οὔτε παμμέγεθες,  
1451 a οὐ γὰρ ἅμα ἡ θεωρία γίνεται ἀλλ' ὀψέταί τοις θεωροῦσι  
τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ ὅλον ἐκ τῆς θεωρίας, οἷον εἰ μυρίων σταδίων  
εἴη ζῶον· ὥστε δεῖ καθάπερ ἐπὶ τῶν σωμάτων καὶ ἐπὶ 5  
τῶν ζῶων ἔχειν μὲν μέγεθος, τοῦτο δὲ εὐσύνοπτον εἶναι,

27. δὴ Bywater: δ' A<sup>c</sup>.

30. μὴ ἐξ ἀνάγκης codd.: ἐξ ἀνάγκης μὴ Pazzi.

41. πᾶν μικρὸν A<sup>c</sup>: πάμμικρον Riccardianus 16: πᾶν μικρὸν Laurentianus lx. 16.

43. χρόνου secl. Bonitz, Spengel: tutatur Arabs.

πᾶν μέγεθος A<sup>c</sup>: παμμέγεθες Riccardianus 16: πᾶν μέγα Laurentianus lx. 16.

1451 a 3. σωμάτων: συστημάτων Bywater.

spectacular effects depends more on the art of the stage machinist than on that of the poet.

VII These principles being established, let us now discuss the proper structure of the Plot, since this is the first and most important part of Tragedy.

Now, according to our definition, Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is complete and whole, and of a certain magnitude; for there may be a whole that is wanting in magnitude. A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An end, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing following it. A middle is that which follows something as some other thing follows it. A well constructed plot, therefore, must neither begin nor end at haphazard, but conform to these principles.

Again, a beautiful object, whether it be a picture of a living organism or any whole composed of parts, must not only have an orderly arrangement of parts, but must also be of a certain magnitude; for beauty depends on magnitude and order. Hence an exceedingly small picture cannot be beautiful; for the view of it is confused, the object being seen in an almost imperceptible moment of time. Nor, again, can one of vast size be beautiful; for as the eye cannot take it all in at once, the unity and sense of the whole is lost for the spectator; as for instance if there were a picture a thousand miles long. As, therefore, in the case of animate bodies and pictures a certain magnitude is necessary, and a magni-

- 5 οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μύθων ἔχειν μὲν μήκος, τοῦτο δὲ  
 εὐμνημόνευτον εἶναι. τοῦ μήκου<sup>6</sup> ὄρος <ὁ> μὲν πρὸς 6  
 τοὺς ἀγῶνας καὶ τὴν αἴσθησιν οὐ τῆς τέχνης ἐστίν· εἰ  
 γὰρ ἔδει ἑκατὸν τραγωδίας ἀγωνίζεσθαι, πρὸς κλεψύδρας  
 ἂν ἡγωνίζοντο, ὥσπερ ποτὲ καὶ ἄλλοτε εἰώθασιν.<sup>7</sup> ὁ δὲ 7  
 10 κατ' αὐτὴν τὴν φύσιν τοῦ πράγματος ὄρος, αἰὲ μὲν ὁ  
 μείζων μέχρι τοῦ σύνδηλος εἶναι καλλίων ἐστὶ κατὰ  
 τὸ μέγεθος· ὥς δὲ ἁπλῶς διορίσαντας εἰπεῖν, ἐν ὅσῳ  
 μεγέθει κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον ἐφεξῆς γιγνομένων  
 συμβαίνει εἰς εὐτυχίαν ἐκ δυστυχίας ἢ ἐξ εὐτυχίας εἰς  
 15 δυστυχίαν μεταβάλλειν, ἱκανὸς ὄρος ἐστὶν τοῦ μεγέθους.  
 VIII μῦθος δ' ἐστὶν εἰς οὐχ ὥσπερ τινὲς οἴονται ἂν περὶ  
 ἓνα ἢ· πολλὰ γὰρ καὶ ἀπειρα<sup>8</sup> τῷ ἐνὶ συμβαίνει, ἐξ ὧν  
 [ἐνίων] οὐδέν ἐστιν ἓν· οὕτως δὲ καὶ πράξεις ἐνὸς  
 20 πολλαί εἰσιν, ἐξ ὧν μία οὐδεμία γίνεται πράξις. διὸ 2  
 20 πάντες εἰκόασιν ἁμαρτάνειν ὅσοι τῶν ποιητῶν Ἑρα-  
 κλῆίδα Θησηίδα καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ποιήματα πεποιήκασιν·  
 οἴονται γάρ, ἐπεὶ εἰς ἦν ὁ Ἑρακλῆς, ἓνα καὶ τὸν μῦθον  
 εἶναι προσήκειν. ὁ δ' Ὀμηρος ὥσπερ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα 3  
 διαφέρει καὶ τοῦτ' ἔοικεν καλῶς ἰδεῖν ἥτοι διὰ τέχνην  
 25 ἢ διὰ φύσιν· Ὀδύσσειαν γὰρ ποιῶν οὐκ ἐποίησεν  
 ἅπαντα ὅσα αὐτῷ συνέβη, οἶον πληγῆναι μὲν ἐν τῷ  
 Παρνασσῷ, μανῆναι δὲ προσποιήσασθαι ἐν τῷ ἀγερμῷ,

6. ὁ add. Bursian: πρὸς μὲν apogr.

8. κλεψύδραν apogr.

9.

εἰώθασιν M. Schmidt: 'sicut solemus dicere etiam aliquo tempore et aliquando' Arabs: φασιν codd.

17. τῷ ἐνὶ apogr.: τῷ γέττει Δ<sup>ο</sup> (cf.

1447 a 17).

18. ἐνίων seclus. Spengel.

tude which may be easily embraced in one view; so in the plot, a certain length is necessary, and a length which can be easily embraced by the memory. The 6 limit of length in relation to dramatic competition and sensuous presentment, is no part of artistic theory. For had it been the rule for a hundred tragedies to compete together, the performance would have been regulated by the water-clock,—as indeed is the practice in certain other contests. But the limit as fixed by the nature of the drama itself is this:—the greater the length, the more beautiful will the piece be, so far as beauty depends on size, provided that the whole be perspicuous. And to define the matter roughly, we may say that the proper magnitude is comprised within such limits, that the sequence of events, according to the law of probability or necessity, will admit of a change from bad fortune to good, or from good fortune to bad.

VIII Unity of plot does not, as some persons think, consist in the unity of the hero. For infinitely various are the incidents in one man's life, which cannot be reduced to unity; and so, too, there are many actions of one man out of which we cannot make one action. Hence the 2 error, as it appears, of all poets who have composed a Heracleid, a Theseid, or other poems of the kind. They imagine that as Heracles was one man, the story of Heracles must also be a unity. But Homer, as in all 3 else he is of surpassing merit, here too—whether from art or natural genius—seems to have happily discerned the truth. In composing the Odyssey he did not include all the adventures of Odysseus—such as his wound on Parnassus, or his feigned madness at the mustering of

ὦν οὐδὲν θατέρου γενομένου ἀναγκαῖον ἦν ἡ εἰκὸς  
 θάτερον γενέσθαι, ἀλλὰ περὶ μίαν πρᾶξιν οἷαν λέγομεν  
 30 τὴν Ὀδύσειαν συνέστησεν, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὴν Ἰλιάδα.  
 χρὴ οὖν καθάπερ καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις μμητικαῖς ἢ μία 4  
 μίμησις ἐνός ἐστίν οὕτω καὶ τὸν μῦθον, ἐπεὶ πράξεως  
 μίμησίς ἐστι, μᾶς τε εἶναι καὶ ταύτης ὅλης καὶ τὰ μέρη  
 συνεστάναι τῶν πραγμάτων οὕτως, ὥστε μετατιθεμένου  
 35 τινὸς μέρους ἢ ἀφαιρουμένου διαφέρεσθαι καὶ κινεῖσθαι  
 τὸ ὅλον· ὃ γὰρ προσὸν ἢ μὴ προσὸν μηδὲν ποιεῖ ἐπί-  
 δηλον, οὐδὲν μόριον τοῦ ὅλου ἐστίν.

IX φανερόν δὲ ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων καὶ ὅτι οὐ τὸ τὰ  
 γεγόμενα λέγειν, τοῦτο ποιητοῦ ἔργον ἐστίν, ἀλλ' οἷα ἂν  
 40 γένοιτο καὶ τὰ δυνατὰ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον.  
 1451 b ὁ γὰρ ἱστορικὸς καὶ ὁ ποιητὴς οὐ τῷ ἢ ἔμμετρα λέγειν 2  
 ἢ ἄμμετρα διαφέρουσιν, εἴη γὰρ ἂν τὰ Ἡροδότου εἰς  
 μέτρα τεθῆναι, καὶ οὐδὲν ἦττον ἂν εἴη ἱστορία τις μετὰ  
 μέτρου ἢ ἄνευ μέτρων, ἀλλὰ τούτῳ διαφέρει, τῷ τὸν  
 5 μὲν τὰ γεγόμενα λέγειν, τὸν δὲ οἷα ἂν γένοιτο. διὸ καὶ 3  
 φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποίησις ἱστορίας ἐστίν·  
 ἢ μὲν γὰρ ποίησις μᾶλλον τὰ καθόλου, ἢ δ' ἱστορία τὰ  
 καθ' ἕκαστον λέγει. / ἐστίν δὲ καθόλου μὲν, τῷ ποίῃ τὰ 4  
 ποῖα ἅττα συμβαίνει λέγειν ἢ πράττειν κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς  
 10 ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον, οὐ στοχάζεται ἢ ποίησις ὀνόματα  
 ἐπιτιθεμένη, τὸ δὲ καθ' ἕκαστον, τί Ἀλκιβιάδης ἔπραξεν  
 ἢ τί ἔπαθεν / ἐπὶ μὲν οὖν τῆς κωμωδίας ἤδη τοῦτο 5  
 δῆλον γέγονεν· συστήσαντες γὰρ τὸν μῦθον διὰ τῶν

28. ἦν ἡ ἀπογρ.: ἦν Δ°. 29. λέγομεν ἀπογρ.: λέγομεν Δ°: ἀν  
 λέγομεν Vahlen. 33. καὶ ταύτης: ταύτης καὶ Susemihl. 35.  
 διαφέρεσθαι: ? διαφορεῖσθαι, cf. de Div. 2, 464 b 13: διαφθεῖρεσθαι coni.  
 Margolionth: habuit fort. utramque lect. Σ, 'corrumpatur et confundatur'  
 Arabs. 36. ποιεῖ, ἐπίδηλον ὡς ἀπογρ. 38. οὐ τὸ ἀπογρ.: οὕτω Δ°.  
 40. [καὶ τὰ δυνατὰ] Maggi. 1451 b 4. τούτῳ . . . τῷ ἀπογρ.: τοῦτο  
 . . . τῷ Δ°: τοῦτο . . . τὸ Spengel. 10. τὸ ἀπογρ.: τὸν Δ°.

the host—incidents between which there was no necessary or probable connexion: but he made the *Odyssey*, and likewise the *Iliad*, to centre round an action, that in our sense of the word is one. As therefore, in the other 4 imitative arts, the imitation is one, when the object imitated is one, so the plot, being an imitation of an action, must imitate one action and that a whole, the structural union of the parts being such that, if any one of them is displaced or removed, the whole will be disjointed and disturbed. For a thing whose presence or absence makes no visible difference, is not an organic part of the whole.

IX It is, moreover, evident from what has been said, that it is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen,—what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity. The 2 poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose. The work of Herodotus might be put into verse, and it would still be a species of history, with metre no less than without it. The true difference is that one relates what has happened, the other what may happen. Poetry, therefore, is a more philosophical and 3 a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular. By the universal 4 I mean how a person of given character will on occasion speak or act, according to the law of probability or necessity; and it is this universality at which poetry aims in the names she attaches to the personages. The particular is—for example—what Alcibiades did or suffered. In Comedy this is already apparent: for here 5 the poet first constructs the plot on the lines of prob-

- εικότων οὐ τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόματα ὑποτιθέασιν, καὶ οὐχ  
 15 ὥσπερ οἱ ἱαμβοποιοὶ περὶ τὸν καθ' ἕκαστον ποιοῦσιν.  
 ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς τραγῳδίας τῶν γενομένων ὀνομάτων ἀντ- 6  
 ἔχονται. αἴτιον δ' ὅτι πιθανόν ἐστι τὸ δυνατόν. τὰ  
 μὲν οὖν μὴ γενόμενα οὐπω πιστεύομεν εἶναι δυνατά, τὰ  
 δὲ γενόμενα φανερόν ὅτι δυνατά, οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἐγένετο, εἰ  
 20 ἦν ἀδύνατα. οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ταῖς τραγῳδαίαις ἐν 7  
 ἐνίαις μὲν ἐν ἡ δύο τῶν γνωρίμων ἐστὶν ὀνομάτων, τὰ  
 δὲ ἄλλα πεπονημένα, ἐν ἐνίαις δὲ οὐδ' ἓν, οἷον ἐν τῷ  
 Ἀγάθωνος ἀνθεῖ· ὁμοίως γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ τά τε πράγματα  
 καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα πεποιοῦνται, καὶ οὐδὲν ἥττον εὐφραίνει·  
 25 ὥστ' οὐ πάντως εἶναι ζητητέον τῶν παραδεδομένων 8  
 μύθων, περὶ οὗς αἱ τραγῳδαίαι εἰσὶν, ἀντέχεσθαι. καὶ  
 γὰρ γελοιὸν τοῦτο ζητεῖν, ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰ γνωρίμα ὀλίγοις  
 γνωρίμα ἐστὶν ἀλλ' ὅμως εὐφραίνει πάντας. δῆλον οὖν 9  
 30 ἐκ τούτων ὅτι τὸν ποιητὴν μᾶλλον τῶν μύθων εἶναι δεῖ  
 ποιητὴν ἢ τῶν μέτρων, ὅσῳ ποιητῆς κατὰ τὴν μέμησιν  
 ἐστὶν, μιμνῆται δὲ τὰς πράξεις. κὰν ἄρα συμβῇ γενο-  
 μένα ποιεῖν, οὐθὲν ἥττον ποιητῆς ἐστι· τῶν γὰρ γενο-  
 μένων ἔνια οὐδὲν κωλύει τοιαῦτα εἶναι οἷα ἂν εἰκὸς  
 35 γενέσθαι καὶ δυνατὰ γενέσθαι, καθ' ὃ ἐκεῖνος αὐτῶν  
 ποιητῆς ἐστίν.

τῶν δὲ ἄλλων μύθων καὶ πράξεων αἱ ἐπεισοδιώδεις 10

14. οὐ (vel οὐχί) scripsi: 'nequaquam' Arabs: οὕτω codd., cf. 1451 a  
 38. ἐπιτιθέασιν apogr., Bekker. 15. τὸν Δ<sup>ο</sup>: τῶν apogr. 20.  
 ἐν ἐνίαις apogr., Sussemihl: ἐνίαις Δ<sup>ο</sup>. 22. ἐν τῷ Ἀγάθωνος ἀνθεῖ:  
 'quemadmodum si quis unum esse bonum statuit' Arabs: male Syrus  
 legisse videtur ἐν τῷ ἀγαθὸν ὅς ἐστι θῆ (Margoliouth). Pro ἀνθεῖ coni. Ἀρθεῖ  
 (dat. Ἀρθεῖς), cf. Parthenius περὶ ἐρωτικῶν παθημάτων, Mackail. 25.  
 εἶναι seclus. Spengel. 26. αἱ <εὐδοκιμοῦσαι> τραγῳδαίαι coni.  
 Vahlen. 34. καὶ <οὐκ ἄλλως> δυνατὰ Sussemihl: καὶ δυνατὰ γενέ-  
 σθαι seclus. Vorländer, om. Arabs. 36. τῶν δὲ ἄλλων Tyrwhitt: τῶν  
 δὲ ἀπλῶν codd.: ἀπλῶς δὲ τῶν Castelvetro.

✓ ability, and then inserts characteristic names;—unlike the lampooners who write about particular individuals. But tragedians still keep to real names, the reason being 6 that what is possible is credible: what has not happened we do not at once feel sure to be possible; but what has happened is manifestly possible; otherwise it would not have happened. / Still there are some tragedies in which 7 there are only one or two well known names, the rest being fictitious. In others, none are well known,—as in Agathon's Flower, where incidents and names alike are fictitious, and yet they give none the less pleasure. We must not, therefore, at all costs keep to the received 8 legends, which are the usual subjects of Tragedy. Indeed, it would be absurd to attempt it; for even familiar subjects are familiar only to a few, and yet give pleasure to all. It clearly follows that the poet or 'maker' 9 should be the maker of plots rather than of verses; since he is a poet because he imitates, and what he imitates are actions. And even if he chances to take an historical subject, he is none the less a poet; for there is no reason why some events that have actually happened should not conform to the law of the probable and possible, and in virtue of that quality in them he is their poet or maker.

Of all plots and actions the epeisodic are the worst. 10



εἰσὶν χεῖρισται. λέγω δ' ἐπεισοδιώδη μῦθον ἐν ᾧ τὰ  
ἐπεισόδια μετ' ἄλληλα οὐτ' εἰκὸς οὐτ' ἀνάγκη εἶναι.  
τοιαῦται δὲ ποιοῦνται ὑπὸ μὲν τῶν φαύλων ποιητῶν δι'  
40 αὐτούς, ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν ἀγαθῶν διὰ τοὺς ὑποκριτάς· ἀγωνί-  
σματα γὰρ ποιοῦντες καὶ παρὰ τὴν δύναμιν παρατεί-  
1452 a νοντες μῦθον πολλάκις διαστρέφειν ἀναγκάζονται τὸ  
ἐφεξῆς. ἐπεὶ δὲ οὐ μόνον τελείας ἐστὶ πράξεως ἢ μίμησις 11  
ἀλλὰ καὶ φοβερῶν καὶ ἐλεεινῶν, ταῦτα δὲ γίνεται [καὶ]  
μάλιστα ὅταν γένηται παρὰ τὴν δόξαν, καὶ μᾶλλον  
5 <ὅταν> δι' ἄλληλα· τὸ γὰρ θαυμαστὸν οὕτως ἔξει 12  
μᾶλλον ἢ εἰ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου καὶ τῆς τύχης, ἐπεὶ καὶ  
τῶν ἀπὸ τύχης ταῦτα θαυμασιώτατα δοκεῖ ὅσα ὥσπερ  
ἐπίτηδες φαίνεται γεγονέναι, οἷον ὡς ὁ ἀνδρῆς ὁ τοῦ  
Μίτυος ἐν Ἀργεῖ ἀπέκτεινεν τὸν αἵτιον τοῦ θανάτου τῷ  
10 Μίτυι, θεωροῦντι ἐμπεσῶν· ἔοικε γὰρ τὰ τοιαῦτα οὐκ  
εἰκῇ γενέσθαι. ὥστε ἀνάγκη τοὺς τοιούτους εἶναι  
καλλίους μύθους.

X εἰσὶ δὲ τῶν μύθων οἱ μὲν ἀπλοῖ οἱ δὲ πεπλεγμένοι,  
καὶ γὰρ αἱ πράξεις ὧν μιμήσεις οἱ μῦθοί εἰσιν ὑπάρχου-  
15 σιν εὐθὺς οὐσαὶ τοιαῦται. λέγω δὲ ἀπλὴν μὲν πρᾶξιν 2  
ἣς γινομένης ὥσπερ ὄριται συνεχοῦς καὶ μιᾶς ἄνευ  
περιπετείας ἢ ἀναγνωρισμοῦ ἢ μετάβασις γίνεται,  
πεπλεγμένη δ' ἐστὶν ἣς μετὰ ἀναγνωρισμοῦ ἢ περι-  
πετείας ἢ ἀμφοῖν ἢ μετάβασις ἐστίν. ταῦτα δὲ δεῖ 3  
20 γίνεσθαι ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς συστάσεως τοῦ μύθου, ὥστε ἐκ

40. ὑποκριτὰς A<sup>o</sup>: κριτὰς apogr. 41. παρατείνοντες apogr., Bekker:  
παρατείναντες A<sup>o</sup>. 1452 a 2. ἢ seclus. Gomperz. 3. καὶ seclus.  
Sussemihl. καὶ μάλιστα καὶ μᾶλλον ὅταν γένηται παρὰ τὴν δόξαν codd.:  
correxuit Reiz: codd. lect. tuetur Tucker, καὶ κάλλιον scripto pro καὶ μᾶλλον:  
[καὶ μᾶλλον] vel [καὶ μάλιστα] Spengel. 18. δ' ἐστὶν ἣς Sussemihl: δὲ  
λέξις A<sup>o</sup>: δὲ ἐστὶν ἐξ ἣς (h. e. δὲ ἄ' ἐξ) Vahlen: δὲ ἐξ ἣς vel δὲ πρᾶξις  
apogr.: δὲ πρᾶξις ἣς Ueberweg.

I call a plot 'episodic' in which the episodes or acts succeed one another without probable or necessary sequence. Bad poets compose such pieces by their own fault, good poets, to please the players; for, as they write show pieces for competition, they stretch the plot beyond its capacity, and are often forced to break the natural continuity.

But again, Tragedy is an imitation not only of a complete action, but of events terrible and pitiful. Such an effect is best produced when the events come on us by surprise; and the effect is heightened when, at the same time, they follow from one another. The tragic wonder will then be greater than if they happened of themselves or by accident; for even coincidences are most striking when they have an air of design. We may instance the statue of Mityls at Argos, which fell upon his murderer while he was a spectator at a festival, and killed him. Such events seem not to be due to mere chance. Plots, therefore, constructed on these principles are necessarily the best.

X Plots are either Simple or Complex, for the actions in real life, of which the plots are an imitation, obviously show a similar distinction. An action which is one and continuous in the sense above defined, I call Simple, when the change of fortune takes place without Reversal (or Recoil) of the Action and without Recognition.

A Complex action is one in which the change is accompanied by such Reversal, or by Recognition, or by both. These last should arise from the internal structure of the plot, so that what follows should be the

τῶν προγεγενημένων συμβαίνειν ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἢ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς γίνεσθαι ταῦτα· διαφέρει γὰρ πολὺ τὸ γίνεσθαι τάδε διὰ τάδε ἢ μετὰ τάδε.

- XI ἔστι δὲ περιπέτεια μὲν ἢ εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον τῶν πρατ-  
 25 τομένων μεταβολή, [καθάπερ εἴρηται,] καὶ τοῦτο δὲ ὥσπερ λέγομεν κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ ἀναγκαῖον· ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ Οἰδίποδι ἐλθὼν ὡς εὐφρανῶν τὸν Οἰδίπου καὶ ἀπαλλάξων τοῦ πρὸς τὴν μητέρα φόβου, δηλώσας δὲ ἦν, τοῦναντίον ἐποίησεν· καὶ ἐν τῷ Λυγκεῖ ὁ μὲν ἀγόμενος  
 30 ὡς ἀποθανούμενος, ὁ δὲ Δαναὸς ἀκολουθῶν ὡς ἀποκτενῶν, τὸν μὲν συνέβη ἐκ τῶν πεπραγμένων ἀποθανεῖν, τὸν δὲ σωθῆναι. ἀναγνώρισις δέ, ὥσπερ καὶ 2 τοῦνομα σημαίνει, ἐξ ἀγνοίας εἰς γνώσιν μεταβολή ἢ εἰς φιλίαν ἢ εἰς ἔχθραν τῶν πρὸς εὐτυχίαν ἢ δυστυχίαν  
 35 ὀρισμένων· καλλίστη δὲ ἀναγνώρισις, ὅταν ἅμα περιπέτεια γίνωνται, οἷον ἔχει ἢ ἐν τῷ Οἰδίποδι. εἰσὶν 3 μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλαι ἀναγνωρίσεις· καὶ γὰρ πρὸς ἄψυχα καὶ τὰ τυχόντα ἔστιν ὡς <δ>περ εἴρηται συμβαίνει, καὶ εἰ πέπραγέ τις ἢ μὴ πέπραγεν ἔστιν ἀναγνωρῆσαι· ἀλλ'  
 40 ἡ μάλιστα τοῦ μύθου καὶ ἡ μάλιστα τῆς πράξεως ἢ εἰρημένη ἐστίν· ἢ γὰρ τοιαύτη ἀναγνώρισις καὶ περι- 4  
 1452 b πέτεια ἢ ἔλεον ἔξει ἢ φόβον, οἷων πράξεων ἢ τραγηδία μίμησις ὑπόκειται· ἔτι δὲ καὶ τὸ ἀτυχεῖν καὶ τὸ εὐτυχεῖν

22. ταῦτα: τάναντία Bonitz: τὰ ὕστερα Gomperz.

25. καθάπερ εἴρηται, tanquam gloss. ad ὥσπερ λέγομεν seclus. Zeller, Gomperz: <ἢ> καθ' ἃ προσήρηται delete commate post μεταβολή Essen, \*probante Susemihl.

34. Post ἔχθραν add. ἢ ἄλλο τι Gomperz.

35. ἅμα περιπέτεια Gomperz.

36. Fort. ὡς Bywater.

38. ἐστὶν ὥσπερ A<sup>o</sup>: ἐστὶν θεοῦ ὥσπερ Riccardianus: ἐστὶν ὡς <δ>περ Spengel: ἐστὶν δὲ <δ>περ Gomperz.

συμβαίνειν apogr.: συμβαίνει A<sup>o</sup>.

39. ἢ μὴ apogr.: εἰ μὴ A<sup>o</sup>.

καὶ περιπέτεια seclus. Susemihl.

καὶ <μάλιστα> ἐὰν καὶ περιπέτεια

ἢ ἔλεον coni. Vahlen.

1452 b 1. ὡς apogr.: ὡς A<sup>o</sup>.

2. ἔτι

δὲ: ἐπειδὴ Susemihl, pos. commate post ὑπόκειται.

*elementary  
concepts*

necessary or probable result of the preceding action. It makes all the difference whether any given event is a case of *propter hoc* or *post hoc*.

XI Reversal (or Recoil) is a change by which a train of action produces the opposite of the effect intended, subject always to our rule of probability or necessity. Thus in the Oedipus, the messenger comes to cheer Oedipus and free him from his alarms about his mother, but by revealing who he is, he produces the opposite effect. Again in the Lynceus, Lynceus is being led away to his death, and Danaus goes with him, meaning to slay him; but the outcome of the action is, that Danaus is killed and Lynceus saved.

Recognition, as the name indicates, is a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune. The best form of recognition is coincident with a Reversal (or Recoil), as in the Oedipus. There are indeed other forms. Even inanimate things of the most trivial kind may sometimes be objects of recognition. Again, we may recognise or discover whether a person has done a thing or not. But the recognition which is most intimately connected with the plot and action is, as we have said, the recognition of persons. This recognition, combined with Reversal, will produce either pity or fear; and actions producing these effects are those which, by our definition, Tragedy represents. Moreover, it is upon such issues that fortune or

ἐπὶ τῶν τοιούτων συμβήσεται. ἐπεὶ δὴ ἡ ἀναγνώρισις 5  
 τινῶν ἐστὶν ἀναγνώρισις, αἱ μὲν θατέρου πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον  
 5 μόνον, ὅταν ᾗ δῆλος ἄτερος τίς ἐστίν, ὅτε δὲ ἀμφοτέρους  
 δεῖ ἀναγνώρισαι, οἷον ἡ μὲν Ἰφιγένεια τῷ Ὀρέστη  
 ἀνεγνωρίσθη ἐκ τῆς πέμψεως τῆς ἐπιστολῆς, ἐκείνου δὲ  
 πρὸς τὴν Ἰφιγένειαν ἄλλης ἔδει ἀναγνωρίσεως.

δύο μὲν οὖν τοῦ μύθου μέρη περὶ ταῦτ' ἐστί, περι- 6  
 10 πέτεια καὶ ἀναγνώρισις, τρίτον δὲ πάθος. [τούτων δὲ  
 περιπέτεια μὲν καὶ ἀναγνώρισις εἴρηται,] πάθος δέ ἐστι  
 πρᾶξις φθαρτικὴ ἢ ὀδυνηρά, οἷον οἳ τε ἐν τῷ φανερωῷ  
 θάνατοι καὶ αἱ περιωδυνῆσαι καὶ τρώσεις καὶ ὅσα  
 τοιαῦτα.

XII [μέρη δὲ τραγωδίας οἷς μὲν ὡς εἶδεσι δεῖ χρῆσθαι  
 16 πρότερον εἵπομεν, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ποσὸν καὶ εἰς ἃ διαιρεῖται  
 κεχωρισμένα τάδε ἐστίν, πρόλογος ἐπεισὸδιον ἔξοδος  
 χορικόν, καὶ τούτου τὸ μὲν πάροδος τὸ δὲ στάσιμον·  
 κοινὰ μὲν ἀπάντων ταῦτα, ἴδια δὲ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς  
 20 καὶ κόμμοι. ἔστιν δὲ πρόλογος μὲν μέρος ὅλον τραγω-  
 δίας τὸ πρὸ χοροῦ παρῶδου, ἐπεισὸδιον δὲ μέρος ὅλον  
 τραγωδίας τὸ μεταξὺ ὅλων χορικῶν μελῶν, ἔξοδος δὲ  
 μέρος ὅλον τραγωδίας μεθ' ὃ οὐκ ἔστι χοροῦ μέλος,  
 χορικοῦ δὲ πάροδος μὲν ἡ πρώτη λέξις ὅλη χοροῦ,  
 25 στάσιμον δὲ μέλος χοροῦ τὸ ἄνευ ἀναπαίστου καὶ  
 τροχαίου, κόμμος δὲ θρήνος κοινὸς χοροῦ καὶ <τῶν>  
 ἀπὸ σκηνῆς. μέρη δὲ τραγωδίας οἷς μὲν ὡς εἶδεσι δεῖ 3

3. ἐπεὶ δὴ ἡ A<sup>c</sup>: ἐπειδὴ apogr.: ἐπεὶ δ' ἡ Bekker.

Σ, ut videtur.

5. ἄτερος Bernays: ἕτερος codd.

4. ἕτερον: ἐταῖρον

Bywater: ἐκείνῳ codd.

9. περὶ seclus. Maggi: περὶ non habuisse

videtur Σ (Margolionth): περὶ ταῦτα Twining.

10. τούτων δὲ—εἴρηται

seclus. Susemihl, om. Arabs.

12. αἳ τε apogr.: ὅτε A<sup>c</sup>.

Totum hoc cap. seclus. Ritter, recte, ut opinor.

19. κοινὰ μὲν . . .

κόμμοι del. Susemihl.

24. ὅλη Westphal: ὅλου A<sup>c</sup>.

26. τῶν add.

Christ praeunte Ritter.

27. οἷς μὲν ὡς εἶδεσι δεῖ apogr.: οἷς μὲν δεῖ A<sup>c</sup>.

misfortune will turn. Recognition, then, being between 5 persons, it may happen that one person only is recognised by the other—when the latter is already known—or it may be necessary that the recognition should be on both sides. Thus Iphigenia is revealed to Orestes by the sending of the letter; but another act of recognition is required to make Orestes known to Iphigenia.

Two parts, then, of the Plot—Reversal and Recogni- 6 tion—turn upon surprises. A third part is the Tragic Incident. The Tragic Incident is a destructive or painful action, such as death on the stage, bodily agony, wounds and the like.

XII [The parts of Tragedy, which must be treated as 7 elements of the whole, have been already mentioned. We now come to the quantitative parts—the separate parts into which Tragedy is divided—namely, Prologue, Episode, Exodos, Choric song; this last being divided into Parodos and Stasimon. These are common to all plays: peculiar to some are the songs of actors from the stage and the Commoi.

The Prologos is that entire part of a tragedy which 2 precedes the Parodos of the Chorus. The Episode is that entire part of a tragedy which is between complete choric songs. The Exodos is that entire part of a tragedy which has no choric song after it. Of the Choric part the Parodos is the first undivided utterance of the Chorus: the Stasimon is a Choric ode without anapaests or trochees: the Commos is a joint lamentation of Chorus and actors. The parts of Tragedy which must be treated 3

χρησθαι πρότερον εἴπαμεν, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ποσὸν καὶ εἰς  
ἃ διαιρεῖται κεχωρισμένα ταῦτ' ἐστίν.]

XIII ὦν δὲ δεῖ στοχάζεσθαι καὶ ἃ δεῖ εὐλαβεῖσθαι συν-  
31 ιστάντας τοὺς μύθους καὶ πόθεν ἔσται τὸ τῆς τραγωδίας  
ἔργον, ἐφεξῆς ἂν εἴη λεκτέον τοῖς νῦν εἰρημένοις. ἐπειδὴ 2  
οὖν δεῖ τὴν σύνθεσιν εἶναι τῆς καλλίστης τραγωδίας μὴ  
ἀπλὴν ἀλλὰ πεπλεγμένην καὶ ταύτην φοβερῶν καὶ  
35 ἔλεεινῶν εἶναι μιμητικὴν, τοῦτο γὰρ ἴδιον τῆς τοιαύτης  
μιμήσεως ἐστίν, πρῶτον μὲν δῆλον ὅτι οὔτε τοὺς ἐπικεικίς  
ἄνδρας δεῖ μεταβάλλοντας φαίνεσθαι ἐξ εὐτυχίας εἰς  
δυστυχίαν, οὐ γὰρ φοβερὸν οὐδὲ ἔλεεινὸν τοῦτο ἀλλὰ  
μιαρὸν ἐστίν· οὔτε τοὺς μοχθηροὺς ἐξ ἀτυχίας εἰς  
40 εὐτυχίαν, ἀτραγωδότατον γὰρ τοῦτ' ἐστὶ πάντων· οὐδὲν  
1453 a γὰρ ἔχει ὦν δεῖ, οὔτε γὰρ φιλόανθρωπον οὔτε ἔλεεινὸν  
οὔτε φοβερόν ἐστίν· οὐδ' αὖ τὸν σφόδρα πονηρὸν ἐξ  
εὐτυχίας εἰς δυστυχίαν μεταπίπτειν· τὸ μὲν γὰρ φιλό-  
άνθρωπον ἔχει ἂν ἢ τοιαύτη σύστασις ἀλλ' οὔτε ἔλεον  
5 οὔτε φόβον, ὁ μὲν γὰρ περὶ τὸν ἀνάξιον ἐστίν· δυστυ-  
χοῦντα, ὁ δὲ περὶ τὸν ὅμοιον, ἔλεος μὲν περὶ τὸν ἀνάξιον,  
φόβος δὲ περὶ τὸν ὅμοιον, ὥστε οὔτε ἔλεεινὸν οὔτε  
φοβερόν ἐσται τὸ συμβαῖνον. ὁ μεταξὺ ἄρα τούτων 3  
λοιπός. ἔστι δὲ τοιοῦτος ὁ μήτε ἀρετῇ διαφέρων καὶ  
10 δικαιοσύνη, μήτε διὰ κακίαν καὶ μοχθηρίαν μεταβάλλων  
εἰς τὴν δυστυχίαν ἀλλὰ δι' ἁμαρτίαν τινά, τῶν ἐν  
μεγάλῃ δόξῃ ὄντων καὶ εὐτυχία, οἷον Οἰδίπους καὶ

30. ὦν apogr. : ὡς A°.

34. πεπλεγμένην seclus. Sussemihl.

1453 a

2. αὖ τὸν apogr. : αὖ τὸ A°.

6. ἔλεος μὲν . . . τὸν ὅμοιον seclus.

Ritter, quod non confirm. Arabs (Margoliouth).

12. Οἰδίπους apogr. :

Δίπους A°.

as elements of the whole have been already mentioned. The quantitative parts—the separate parts into which it is divided—are here enumerated.]

XIII As the sequel to what has already been said, we must proceed to consider what the poet should aim at, and what he should avoid, in constructing his plots; and by what means the specific effect of Tragedy will be produced.

A perfect tragedy should, as we have seen, be arranged <sup>2</sup> not on the simple but on the complex plan. It should, moreover, imitate actions which excite pity and fear, this being the distinctive mark of tragic imitation. It follows plainly, in the first place, that the change of fortune presented must not be the spectacle of a virtuous man brought from prosperity to adversity: for this moves neither pity nor fear; it merely shocks us. Nor, again, that of a bad man passing from adversity to prosperity: for nothing can be more alien to the spirit of Tragedy; it <sup>1463</sup> possesses no single tragic quality; it neither satisfies the moral sense, nor calls forth pity or fear. Nor, again, should the downfall of the utter villain be exhibited. A plot of this kind would, doubtless, satisfy the moral sense, but it would inspire neither pity nor fear; for pity is aroused by unmerited misfortune, fear by the misfortune of a man like ourselves. Such an event, therefore, will be neither pitiful nor terrible. There remains, then, the character between these two extremes,—that of a man who is not eminently good and just, yet whose misfortune is brought about not by vice or depravity, but by some error or frailty. He must be one who is highly renowned and prosperous,—a



Θυέστης καὶ οἱ ἐκ τῶν τοιούτων γενῶν ἐπιφανεῖς ἄνδρες.  
 ἀνάγκη ἄρα τὸν καλῶς ἔχοντα μῦθον ἀπλοῦν εἶναι 4  
 15 μᾶλλον ἢ διπλοῦν, ὥσπερ τινές φασι, καὶ μεταβάλλειν  
 οὐκ εἰς εὐτυχίαν ἐκ δυστυχίας ἀλλὰ τὸναναντίον ἐξ  
 εὐτυχίας εἰς δυστυχίαν, μὴ διὰ μοχθηρίαν ἀλλὰ δι'  
 ἁμαρτίαν μεγάλην ἢ οἴου εἶρηται ἢ βελτίονος μᾶλλον  
 ἢ χειρόνος. σημεῖον δὲ καὶ τὸ γιγνόμενον· πρῶτον μὲν 5  
 20 γὰρ οἱ ποιηταὶ τοὺς τυχόντας μύθους ἀπηρίθμουν, νῦν  
 δὲ περὶ ὀλίγας οἰκίας αἱ [κάλλισται] τραγῳδαί συντί-  
 θενται, οἷον περὶ Ἀλκμαίωνα καὶ Οἰδίπουν καὶ Ὀρέστην  
 καὶ Μελέαγρον καὶ Θυέστην καὶ Τήλεφον καὶ ὅσοις  
 ἄλλοις συμβέβηκεν ἢ παθεῖν δεινὰ ἢ ποιῆσαι. ἡ μὲν  
 25 οὖν κατὰ τὴν τέχνην καλλίστη τραγῳδία ἐκ ταύτης  
 τῆς συστάσεως ἐστὶ. διὸ καὶ οἱ Εὐριπίδῃ ἐγκαλοῦντες 6  
 τοῦτ' αὐτὸ ἁμαρτάνουσιν, ὅτι τοῦτο δρᾷ ἐν ταῖς τραγῳ-  
 δαίαις καὶ πολλὰ αὐτοῦ εἰς δυστυχίαν τελευτῶσιν.  
 τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν ὥσπερ εἶρηται ὀρθόν. σημεῖον δὲ  
 30 μέγιστον· ἐπὶ γὰρ τῶν σκηνῶν καὶ τῶν ἀγώνων τραγι-  
 κώταται αἱ τοιαῦται φαίνονται, ἂν κατορθωθῶσιν, καὶ  
 ὁ Εὐριπίδης εἰ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα μὴ εὖ οἰκονομεῖ ἀλλὰ  
 τραγικώτατός γε τῶν ποιητῶν φαίνεται. δευτέρα δ' ἡ 7  
 πρώτη λεγομένη ὑπὸ τινῶν ἐστὶν [σύστασις] ἢ διπλὴν  
 35 τε τὴν σύστασιν ἔχουσα, καθάπερ ἡ Ὀδύσσεια, καὶ  
 τελευτῶσα ἐξ ἐναντίας τοῖς βελτίοσι καὶ χειρόσι.  
 δοκεῖ δὲ εἶναι πρώτη διὰ τὴν τῶν θεάτρων ἀσθένειαν·  
 ἀκολουθοῦσι γὰρ οἱ ποιηταὶ κατ' εὐχὴν ποιοῦντες τοῖς  
 θεαταῖς. ἔστιν δὲ οὐχ αὕτη <ἡ> ἀπὸ τραγῳδίας ἡδονὴ 8

21. κάλλισται seclus. Christ, om. iam Σ. 27. τοῦτ' αὐτὸ Thurot: αὐτοὶ

Reiz: τὸ αὐτὸ codd. Vahlen, secludendum coni. Margoliouth collato Arabe.

28. <αἱ> πολλαὶ Knebel: ἰ πολλαὶ <αἱ> Tyrrell. 34. σύστασις

seclus. Twining. 37. θεάτρων A<sup>o</sup> et Σ, ut videtur (cf. 1449 a 9,

Herod. vi. 21 ἐς δάκρυα ἔπεσε τὸ θέητρον, Aristoph. Eq. 233 τὸ γὰρ θέητρον

δεξιόν): θεατῶν apogr. 39. αὕτη <ἡ> coni. Vahlen.

personage like Oedipus, Thyestes, or other illustrious men of such families.

A well constructed plot should, therefore, be single 4 in its issue, rather than double as some maintain. The change of fortune should be not from bad to good, but, reversely, from good to bad. It should come about as the result not of vice, but of some great error or frailty, in a character either such as we have described, or better rather than worse. The practice of the stage bears out 5 our view. At first the poets recounted any legend that came in their way. Now, tragedies are founded on the story of a few houses,—on the fortunes of Alcmaeon, Oedipus, Orestes, Meleager, Thyestes, Telephus, and those others who have done or suffered something terrible. A tragedy, then, to be perfect according to the rules of art should be of this construction. Hence they are in error 6 who censure Euripides just because he follows this principle in his plays, many of which end unhappily. It is, as we have said, the right ending. The best proof is that on the stage and in dramatic competition, such plays, if they are well represented, are the most tragic in effect; and Euripides, faulty as he is in the general management of his subject, yet is felt to be the most tragic of the poets.

In the second rank comes the kind of tragedy which 7 some place first. Like the *Odyssey*, it has a double thread of plot, and also an opposite catastrophe for the good and for the bad. It is accounted the best because of the weakness of the spectators; for the poet is guided in what he writes by the wishes of his audience. The 8 pleasure, however, thence derived is not the true tragic

40 ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τῆς κωμωδίας οἰκεία· ἐκεῖ γὰρ οἱ ἂν  
 ἔχθιστοι ὦσιν ἐν τῷ μύθῳ, οἷον Ὀρέστης καὶ Αἰγισθος,  
 φίλοι γενόμενοι ἐπὶ τελευτῆς ἐξέρχονται καὶ ἀποθνήσκει  
 οὐδείς ὑπ' οὐδενός.

XIV  
 1453 b ἔστιν μὲν οὖν τὸ φοβερὸν καὶ ἐλεεινὸν ἐκ τῆς ὀψέως  
 γίνεσθαι, ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς συστάσεως τῶν  
 πραγμάτων, ὅπερ ἐστὶ πρότερον καὶ ποιητοῦ ἀμείνωνος.  
 δεῖ γὰρ καὶ ἄνευ τοῦ ὁρᾶν οὕτω συνεστάναι τὸν μῦθον,  
 5 ὥστε τὸν ἀκούοντα τὰ πράγματα γινόμενα καὶ φρίττειν  
 καὶ ἐλεεῖν ἐκ τῶν συμβαινόντων· ἅπερ ἂν πάθοι τις  
 ἀκούων τὸν τοῦ Οἰδίου μῦθον. τὸ δὲ διὰ τῆς ὀψέως 2  
 τοῦτο παρασκευάζειν ἀτεχνότερον καὶ χορηγίας δεόμενόν  
 ἐστίν. οἱ δὲ μὴ τὸ φοβερὸν διὰ τῆς ὀψέως ἀλλὰ τὸ  
 10 τερατῶδες μόνον παρασκευάζοντες οὐδὲν τραγωδίᾳ κοινω-  
 νοῦσιν· οὐ γὰρ πᾶσαν δεῖ ζητεῖν ἡδονὴν ἀπὸ τραγωδίας  
 ἀλλὰ τὴν οἰκείαν. ἐπεὶ δὲ τὴν ἀπὸ ἐλέου καὶ φόβου 3  
 διὰ μιμήσεως δεῖ ἡδονὴν παρασκευάζειν τὸν ποιητὴν,  
 φανερόν ὥς τοῦτο ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν ἐμποιεῖται. ποῖα  
 15 οὖν δεινὰ ἢ ποῖα οἰκτρὰ φαίνεται τῶν συμπιπτόντων,  
 λάβωμεν. ἀνάγκη δὲ ἢ φίλων εἶναι πρὸς ἀλλήλους 4  
 τὰς τοιαύτας πράξεις ἢ ἐχθρῶν ἢ μηδετέρων. ἂν μὲν  
 οὖν ἐχθρὸς ἐχθρόν, οὐδὲν ἐλεεινὸν οὔτε ποιῶν οὔτε  
 μέλλων, πλὴν κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ πάθος· οὐδ' ἂν μηδετέρως  
 20 ἔχοντες· ὅταν δ' ἐν ταῖς φιλαῖς ἐγγένηται τὰ πάθη,

40. αἱ ἂν Bonitz: ἀν' αἱ codd.: καὶ αἱ Spengel.

τερον ἀπογρ.: ἀτεχνώτερον A°.

ἐχθρόν: ἐχθρόν ἀποκτείνῃ Bekk. praesunte Pazzi.

οὐδ' > ἐλεεινὸν Ueberweg.

1453 b 8. ἀτεχνό-

16. δὴ Spengel: δὲ codd.

18.

ἐλεεινόν: <φοβερόν

pleasure. It is proper rather to Comedy, where those who, in the piece, are the deadliest enemies—like Orestes and Aegisthus—quit the stage as friends at the close, and no one slays or is slain.

XIV Fear and pity may be aroused by spectacular means; <sup>1453</sup> but they may also result from the inner structure of the piece, which is the better way, and indicates a superior poet. For the plot ought to be so constructed that, even without the aid of the eye, he who hears the tale told will thrill with horror and melt to pity at what takes place. This is the impression we should receive from hearing the story of the Oedipus. But to produce this 2 effect by the mere spectacle is a less artistic method, and dependent on extraneous aids. Those who employ spectacular means to create a sense not of the terrible but of the monstrous, are strangers to the purpose of Tragedy; for we must not demand of Tragedy any and every kind of pleasure, but only that which is proper to it. And since the pleasure which the poet should 3 afford is that which comes from pity and fear through imitation, it is evident that this quality must be impressed upon the incidents.

✓ Let us then determine what are the circumstances which strike us as terrible or pitiful.

Actions capable of this effect must happen between 4 persons who are either friends or enemies or indifferent to one another. If an enemy kills an enemy, there is nothing to excite pity either in the act or the intention, —except so far as the suffering in itself is pitiful. So again with indifferent persons. But when the tragic incident occurs between those who are near or dear to

οἶον εἰ ἀδελφὸς ἀδελφὸν ἢ υἱὸς πατέρα ἢ μήτηρ υἱὸν  
 ἢ υἱὸς μητέρα ἀποκτείνει ἢ μέλλει ἢ τι ἄλλο τοιοῦτον  
 δρᾶ, ταῦτα ζητητέον. τοὺς μὲν οὖν παρειλημμένους 5  
 μύθους λύειν οὐκ ἔστιν, λέγω δὲ οἶον τὴν Κλυταιμνήστραν  
 25 ἀποθανοῦσαν ὑπὸ τοῦ Ὀρέστου καὶ τὴν Ἐριφύλην ὑπὸ  
 τοῦ Ἀλκμαίωνος, αὐτὸν δὲ εὕρισκειν δεῖ καὶ τοῖς παρα-  
 δεδομένοις χρῆσθαι καλῶς. τὸ δὲ καλῶς τί λέγομεν,  
 εἴπωμεν σαφέστερον. ἔστι μὲν γὰρ οὕτω γίνεσθαι τὴν 6  
 πρᾶξιν, ὥσπερ οἱ παλαιοὶ ἐποιοῦν εἰδότας καὶ γυνώ-  
 30 σκοντας, καθάπερ καὶ Εὐριπίδης ἐποίησεν ἀποκτείνουσιν  
 τοὺς παῖδας τὴν Μήδειαν. ἔστιν δὲ πρᾶξι μὲν,  
 ἀγνοοῦντας δὲ πρᾶξι τὸ δεινόν, εἰθ' ὕστερον ἀναγνωρίσαι  
 τὴν φιλίαν, ὥσπερ ὁ Σοφοκλέους Οἰδίπους· τοῦτο μὲν  
 οὖν ἔξω τοῦ δράματος, ἐν δ' αὐτῇ τῇ τραγῳδίᾳ οἶον ὁ  
 35 Ἀλκμαίων ὁ Ἀστυδάμαντος ἢ ὁ Τηλέγονος ὁ ἐν τῷ  
 τραυματίᾳ Ὀδυσσεῖ. ἔτι δὲ τρίτον παρὰ ταῦτα τὸ 7  
 μέλλοντα ποιεῖν τι τῶν ἀνηκέστων δι' ἀγνοίαν ἀναγνω-  
 ρίσαι πρὶν ποιῆσαι. καὶ παρὰ ταῦτα οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλως.  
 ἢ γὰρ πρᾶξι ἀνάγκη ἢ μὴ καὶ εἰδότας ἢ μὴ εἰδότας.  
 40 τούτων δὲ τὸ μὲν γινώσκοντα μελλῆσαι καὶ μὴ πρᾶξι  
 χεῖριστον· τό τε γὰρ μίαιρὸν ἔχει, καὶ οὐ τραγικόν·  
 1454 a ἀπαθὲς γάρ. διόπερ οὐδεὶς ποιεῖ ὁμοίως, εἰ μὴ Ὀλυνάκις,  
 οἶον ἐν Ἀντιγόῃ τὸν Κρέοντα ὁ Αἴμων. τὸ δὲ πρᾶξι 8  
 δεύτερον. βέλτιον δὲ τὸ ἀγνοοῦντα μὲν πρᾶξι, πράξαντα

21. εἰ ἀδελφὸς Sylburg: ἢ ἀδελφὸς codd.

23. δρᾶ apogr.: δρᾶν A°.

28. εἴπωμεν apogr.: εἴπομεν A°.

34. ὁ Ἀλκμαίων ὁ Gryph.: ὁ Ἀλκμαίωνος codd. 36. Post παρὰ ταῦτα, &lt;τὸ μελλῆσαι γινώσκοντα καὶ μὴ ποιῆσαι, καὶ τέταρτον&gt; conl. Vahlen: παρὰ ταῦτα seclus. M. Schmidt. τὸ Bonitz: τὸν A°.

1454 a 3-7. Huius loci ordinem ita restituendum censet Susemihl: βέλτιον δὲ τὸ τελευταῖον, λέγω δὲ οἶον . . . ἀλλ' ἀνεγνώρισεν· κράτιστον δὲ τὸ ἀγνοοῦντα μὲν . . . ἀναγνωρίσαι· τό τε γὰρ μίαιρὸν . . . ἐκπληκτικόν.

one another—if, for example, a brother kills, or intends to kill, a brother, a son his father, a mother her son, a son his mother, or any other deed of the kind is done—these are the situations to be looked for by the poet. He may not indeed destroy the framework of the received legends—the 5 fact, for instance, that Clytemnestra was slain by Orestes and Eriphyle by Alcmaeon—but he ought to show invention of his own, and skilfully handle the traditional material. Let us explain more clearly what is meant by skilful handling.

The action may be done consciously and with know- 6 ledge of the persons, in the manner of the older poets. It is thus indeed that Euripides makes Medea slay her children. Or, again, the deed of horror may be done, but done in ignorance, and the tie of kinship or friendship be discovered afterwards. The Oedipus of Sophocles is an example. Here, indeed, the incident is outside the drama proper; but cases occur where it falls within the action of the play: one may cite the Alcmaeon of Astydamos, or Telegonus in the Wounded Odysseus. Again, there is a third case, where some one is just 7 about to do some irreparable deed through ignorance, and makes the discovery before it is done. These are the only possible ways. For the deed must either be done or not done,—and that wittingly or unwittingly. But of all these ways, to be about to act knowing the persons, and then not to act, is the worst. It is shocking without being tragic, for no disaster follows. It is, 1484 therefore, never, or very rarely, found in poetry. One instance, however, is in the Antigone, where Haemon threatens to kill Creon. The next and better way is 8 that the deed should be perpetrated. Still better, that

- δὲ ἀναγνώρισαι· τό τε γὰρ μαρὸν οὐ πρόσεστιν καὶ ἡ  
 5 ἀναγνώρισις ἐκπληκτικόν. κράτιστον δὲ τὸ τελευταῖον, 9  
 λέγω δὲ οἶον ἐν τῷ Κρεσφόντῃ ἢ Μερόπῃ μέλλει τὸν  
 υἱὸν ἀποκτείνειν, ἀποκτείνει δὲ οὐ, ἀλλ' ἀνεγνώρισεν,  
 καὶ ἐν τῇ Ἰφυγενείᾳ ἢ ἀδελφῇ τὸν ἀδελφόν, καὶ ἐν τῇ  
 Ἑλλῃ ὁ υἱὸς τὴν μητέρα ἐκδιδόναι μέλλων ἀνεγνώρισεν.  
 10 διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο, ὅπερ πάλαι εἴρηται, οὐ περὶ πολλὰ  
 γένη αἱ τραγῳδίαί εἰσιν. ζητοῦντες γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ  
 τέχνης ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τύχης εὗρον τὸ τοιοῦτον παρασκευάζειν  
 ἐν τοῖς μύθοις. ἀναγκάζονται οὖν ἐπὶ ταύτας τῶν ἐκείνης  
 ἀπαντᾶν ὅσαις τὰ τοιαῦτα συμβέβηκε πάθῃ.  
 15 περὶ μὲν οὖν τῆς τῶν πραγμάτων συστάσεως καὶ  
 ποίους τινὰς εἶναι δεῖ τοὺς μύθους εἴρηται ἱκανῶς.  
 XV περὶ δὲ τὰ ἤθη τέτταρά ἐστιν ὧν δεῖ στοχάζεσθαι,  
 ἐν μὲν καὶ πρῶτον ὅπως χρηστὰ ἦ. ἔξει δὲ ἥθος μὲν  
 εἰς ὅσπερ ἐλέχθη ποιῇ φανερόν ὁ λόγος ἢ ἡ πρᾶξις  
 20 προαίρεσιν τινα [ἦ], χρηστὸν δὲ εἰς ἀνὴρ χρηστήν. ἐστὶν  
 δὲ ἐν ἐκάστῳ γένει· καὶ γὰρ γυνή ἐστὶν χρηστή καὶ  
 δούλος, καίτοι γε ἴσως τούτων τὸ μὲν χεῖρον, τὸ δὲ ὅλως  
 φαῦλόν ἐστιν. δεύτερον δὲ τὰ ἀρμόττοντα· ἐστὶν γὰρ 2  
 ἀνδρεῖον μὲν τι ἥθος, ἀλλ' οὐχ ἀρμόττον γυναικὶ τὸ  
 25 ἀνδρεῖαν ἢ δεινὴν εἶναι. τρίτον δὲ τὸ ὁμοίον. τοῦτο 3

5. κρατεῖ <δὲ πλεῖ>στον Tucker.

9. Ἑλλῃ: Ἀντιόπη Valckenaer.

19. φανεράν Ald., Bekker.

20. προαίρεσιν τινα ἢ Δ<sup>o</sup>: ἡ secludendum, vel <ἡ τις ἀν> ἡ coni. Vahlen (? cf. Arab.): <ἡν>τινα <δ> ἢ Bywater: ἡ φυγὴν Düntzer: προαίρεσιν τινα <ἔχοντα, ὅποια τις ἀν> ἡ Gomperz: ἡ προαίρεσιν τινα, φαῦλον μὲν εἰς ἀνὴρ φαῦλη ἡ, χρηστὸν κ.τ.λ. apogr.

23. τὸ ἀρμόττοντα coni. Vahlen, probante Gomperz.

24. τι ἥθος Hermann:

τὸ ἥθος codd. τὸ apogr.: \*τῷ Δ<sup>o</sup>: οὕτως Vahl. collato Pol. iii. 4, 1277 b 20. Desunt in Arabe verba τῷ ἀνδρεῖαν . . . εἶναι, quorum vicem supplet haec clausula, 'ne ut appareat quidem in ea omnino' (Margoliouth). Unde Diels τῷ ἀνδρεῖαν . . . εἶναι glossema esse arbitratus quod veram lectionem receperit, scribendum esse coni. ὥστε μὴδὲ φαίνεσθαι

it should be perpetrated in ignorance, and the discovery made afterwards. There is then nothing to shock us, while the discovery produces a startling effect. The last 9 case is the best, as when in the *Cresphontes* Merope is about to slay her son, but, recognising who he is, spares his life. So in the *Iphigenia*, the sister recognises the brother just in time. Again in the *Helle*, the son recognises the mother when on the point of giving her up. ~~is~~, then, is why a few families only, as has been already observed, furnish the subjects of tragedy. It was not art, but happy chance, that led poets to look for such situations and so impress the tragic quality upon their plots. They are compelled, therefore, to have recourse to those houses whose history contains moving incidents like these.

Enough has now been said concerning the structure of the incidents, and the proper constitution of the plot.

- XV In respect of Character there are four things to be aimed at. First, and most important, it must be good. Now any speech or action that manifests moral purpose of any kind will be expressive of character: the character will be good if the purpose is good. This rule is relative to each class. Even a woman may be good, and also a slave; though the woman may be said to be an inferior being, and the slave quite worthless. The second thing 2 to aim at is propriety. There is a type of manly valour; but for a woman to be valiant, or terrible, would be inappropriate. Thirdly, character must be true to life: for 3



γὰρ ἕτερον τοῦ χρηστὸν τὸ ἦθος καὶ ἀρμόττον ποιῆσαι  
ὥσπερ εἴρηται. τέταρτον δὲ τὸ ὁμαλόν. κὰν γὰρ 4  
ἀνώμαλός τις ᾗ ὁ τὴν μίμησιν παρέχων καὶ τοιοῦτον  
ἦθος ὑποτιθεῖς, ὅμως ὁμαλῶς ἀνώμαλον δεῖ εἶναι. ἔστιν 5  
30 δὲ παράδειγμα πονηρίας μὲν ἦθους μὴ ἀναγκαίως οἷον ὁ  
Μενέλαος ὁ ἐν τῷ Ὀρέστη, τοῦ δὲ ἀπρεποῦς καὶ μὴ  
ἀρμόττοντος ὃ τε θρήνος Ὀδυσσέως ἐν τῇ Σκύλλῃ καὶ  
ἡ τῆς Μελαυνίπης ῥῆσις, τοῦ δὲ ἀνωμάλου ἡ ἐν Αὐλίδι  
Ἴφιγένεια· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔοικεν ἡ ἱκετεύουσα τῇ ὑστέρα.  
35 χρὴ δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἡθεσιν ὥσπερ καὶ ἐν τῇ τῶν πραγ- 6  
μάτων συστάσει ἀεὶ ζητεῖν ἡ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον ἡ τὸ εἰκός,  
ὥστε τὸν τοιοῦτον τὰ τοιαῦτα λέγειν ἡ πράττειν ἡ  
ἀναγκαῖον ἡ εἰκός, καὶ τοῦτο μετὰ τοῦτο γίνεσθαι ἡ  
ἀναγκαῖον ἡ εἰκός. φανερόν οὖν ὅτι καὶ τὰς λύσεις τῶν 7  
1454 b μύθων ἐξ αὐτοῦ δεῖ τοῦ μύθου συμβαίνειν καὶ μὴ ὥσπερ  
ἐν τῇ Μηδείᾳ ἀπὸ μηχανῆς καὶ ἐν τῇ Ἰλιάδι τὰ περὶ  
τὸν ἀπόπλουν· ἀλλὰ μηχανῇ χρηστέον ἐπὶ τὰ ἔξω τοῦ  
δράματος, ἡ ὅσα πρὸ τοῦ γέγονεν ἀ οὐχ οἷον τε ἀνθρώπου  
5 εἰδέναι, ἡ ὅσα ὕστερον, ἀ δέεται προαγορεύσεως καὶ

καθόλου: 'The manly character is indeed sometimes found even in a woman (ἔστιν γὰρ ἀνδρείων μὲν τὸ ἦθος), but it is not appropriate to her, so that it never appears as a general characteristic of the sex.' Sed hoc aliter dicendum fuisse suspicari licet; itaque Susemihl huiusmodi aliquid tentavit, ὥστε μηδὲ φαίνεσθαι ἐν αὐτῇ ὡς ἐπίπαν, vel ὡς ἐπίπαν εἰπεῖν: 'There is indeed a character (τὸ ἦθος) of manly courage, but it is not appropriate to a woman, and as a rule is not found in her at all.'

27. ὥσπερ εἴρηται fort. secludendum: ἀπερ εἴρηται Hermann: lacunam ante ὥσπερ statuit Spengel, quem seq. Susemihl.

30. ἀναγκαῖον A<sup>c</sup>: ἀναγκαίου apogr., Bywater: ἀναγκαῖας Thurot: [μὴ ἀναγκαῖον] Gomperz. οἷον seclus. E. Müller, Sus. ed. 1, Christ.

32. <τοῦ> Ὀδυσσέως Bywater. 33. Exemplum τοῦ ἀνομοίου post ῥῆσις intercidisse coni. Vettori; cf. Susemihl, Christ.

37 et 38. ἡ ἀναγκαῖον Hermann. 38. <ὡς> καὶ τοῦτο Bywater, fort. recte.

39. τῶν μύθων: τῶν ἡθῶν Σ, ut videtur (Margoliouth).

1454 b 3. ἀπόπλουν apogr., Σ: ἀπλόων A<sup>c</sup>. 5. Commate post ὕστερον disting. W. R. Hardie, qui ἀγγελλας ad ὅσα πρὸ τοῦ refert, προαγορεύσεως ad ὅσα ὕστερον.

this is a distinct thing from goodness and propriety, as here described. The fourth point is consistency: for though 4 the subject of the imitation, who suggested the type, be inconsistent, still he must be consistently inconsistent. As an example of character gratuitously bad, we have 5 Menelaus in the Orestes: of character indecorous and inappropriate, the lament of Odysseus in the Scylla, and the speech of Melanippe: of inconsistency, the Iphigenia at Aulis,—for Iphigenia the suppliant in no way resembles her later self.

As in the structure of the plot, so too in the por- 6 traiture of character, the poet should always aim either at the necessary or the probable. Thus a person of a given character should speak or act in a given way, by the rule either of necessity or of probability; just as this event should follow that by necessary or probable sequence. It is therefore evident that the unravelling 7 of the plot, no less than the complication, must arise out of the plot itself, it must not be brought about by the *Deus ex Machina*,—as in the Medea, or in the Return of the Greeks in the Iliad. The *Deus ex Machina* should be employed only for events external to the drama,—for antecedent or subsequent events, which lie beyond the range of human knowledge, and which require to be

- ἀγγελίας· ἅπαντα γὰρ ἀποδίδομεν τοῖς θεοῖς ὄραν.  
 ἄλογον δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν, εἰ δὲ μή, ἕξω  
 τῆς τραγῳδίας, οἷον τὸ ἐν τῷ Οἰδίποδι τῷ Σοφοκλέους.  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ μίμησις ἐστὶν ἡ τραγῳδία βελτιόνων <ἡ καθ' > 8
- 10 ἡμᾶς, δεῖ μιμῆσθαι τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς εἰκονογράφους· καὶ  
 γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι ἀποδιδόντες τὴν ἰδίαν μορφήν ὁμοίους ποιοῦν-  
 τες καλλίους γράφουσιν· οὕτω καὶ τὸν ποιητὴν μιμού-  
 μενον καὶ ὀργίλους καὶ ῥαθύμους καὶ τᾶλλα τὰ τοιαῦτα  
 ἔχοντας ἐπὶ τῶν ἡθῶν, τοιούτους ὄντας ἐπιεικεῖς ποιεῖν·
- 15 [παράδειγμα σκληρότητος] οἷον τὸν Ἀχιλλέα Ἀγάθων  
 καὶ Ὀμηρος. ταῦτα δὲ δεῖ διατηρεῖν καὶ πρὸς τούτοις 9  
 τὰς παρὰ τὰ ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἀκολουθοῦσας αἰσθήσεις τῇ  
 ποιητικῇ· καὶ γὰρ κατ' αὐτὰς ἐστὶν ἀμαρτάνειν πολλὰ-  
 κισ, εἴρηται δὲ περὶ αὐτῶν ἐν τοῖς ἐκδεδομένοις λόγοις
- 20 ἱκανῶς.

- XVI ἀναγνώρισις δὲ τί μὲν ἐστὶν, εἴρηται πρότερον· εἶδη  
 δὲ ἀναγνωρίσεως, πρώτη μὲν ἡ ἀτεχνοτάτη καὶ ἡ πλείστη  
 χρῶνται δι' ἀπορίαν, ἡ διὰ τῶν σημείων. τούτων δὲ τὰ 2  
 μὲν σύμφυτα, οἷον “λόγχην ἣν φοροῦσι Γηγενεῖς” ἡ
- 25 ἀστέρας οἷους ἐν τῷ Θυέστη Καρκίνος, τὰ δὲ ἐπικτήτα,  
 καὶ τούτων τὰ μὲν ἐν τῷ σώματι, οἷον οὐλαί, τὰ δὲ ἐκτός,  
 τὰ περιδέραια καὶ οἷον ἐν τῇ Τυροῖ διὰ τῆς σκάφης.  
 ἐστὶν δὲ καὶ τούτοις χρῆσθαι ἡ βέλτιον ἡ χεῖρον, οἷον 3  
 Ὀδυσσεὺς διὰ τῆς οὐλῆς ἄλλως ἀνεγνωρίσθη ὑπὸ τῆς

8. τὸ vel τῷ apogr.: τὸ ! A<sup>c</sup>: τὰ Ald. 9. ἡ καθ' ἡμᾶς Stahr, Margolionth collato Arabe: ἡμᾶς codd. 15. παράδειγμα σκληρότητος seclius. Bywater. 16. δὴ δεῖ Ald., Bekker: δὴ A<sup>c</sup>: δεῖ apogr. 17. τὰς παρὰ τὰ vel τὰ παρὰ τὰς apogr.: τὰς παρὰ τὰς A<sup>c</sup>. 22. ἀτεχνοτάτη apogr. pauca. ἡ πλείστη apogr.: ἡ πλείστη A<sup>c</sup>. 23. ἡ apogr.: ἡ A<sup>c</sup>. 27. περιδέραια Pazzi et apogr. pauca: περιδέρρεα A<sup>c</sup>: περὶ δέραια Ald. οἷον apogr.: αἱ A<sup>c</sup>. σκάφης: 'ensis' Arabs, σπάθης Σ, ut videtur (R. Ellis). 29. <δ> Ὀδυσσεὺς Bywater.

reported or foretold ; for to the gods we ascribe the power of seeing all things. Within the action there must be nothing irrational. If the irrational cannot be excluded, it should be outside the scope of the tragedy. Such is the irrational element in the Oedipus of Sophocles.

Again, since Tragedy is an imitation of persons who 8 are above the common level, the example of good portrait-painters should be followed. They, while reproducing the distinctive form of the original, make a likeness which is true to life and yet more beautiful. So too ✓ the poet, in representing men who are irascible or indolent, or have other defects of character, should preserve the type and yet ennoble it. In this way Achilles is portrayed by Agathon and Homer.

These are rules the poet should observe. Nor should 9 he neglect those appeals to the senses, which, though not among the essentials, are the concomitants of poetry ; for here too there is much room for error. But of this enough has been said in the published treatises.

XVI What Recognition is has been already explained. We will now enumerate its kinds.

First, the least artistic form, which, from poverty of wit, is most commonly employed—recognition by signs. Of these some are congenital,—such as ‘the spear which 2 the earth-born race bear on their bodies,’ or the stars introduced by Carcinus in his Thyestes. Others are acquired after birth ; and of these some are bodily marks, as scars ; some external tokens, as necklaces, or the little ark in the Tyro by which the discovery is effected. Even 3 these admit of more or less skilful treatment. Thus in the recognition of Odysseus by his scar, the discovery is

30 τροφού καὶ ἄλλως ὑπὸ τῶν συβοτῶν· εἰσὶ γὰρ αἱ μὲν  
πίστεως ἕνεκα ἀτεχνότεραι, καὶ αἱ τοιαῦται πᾶσαι, αἱ δὲ  
ἐκ περιπετείας, ὥσπερ ἡ ἐν τοῖς Νίπτροις, βελτίους.  
δεύτεραι δὲ αἱ πεποιημέναι ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ, διὸ ἄτεχνοι. 4  
οἶον Ὁρέστης ἐν τῇ Ἰφιγενείᾳ ἀνεγνώρισεν ὅτι Ὁρέστης·  
35 ἐκείνη μὲν γὰρ διὰ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς, ἐκείνος δὲ αὐτὸς λέγει  
ἃ βούλεται ὁ ποιητὴς ἄλλ' οὐχ ὁ μῦθος· διὸ ἐγγύς τι  
τῆς εἰρημένης ἀμαρτίας ἐστίν, ἐξῆν γὰρ ἂν ἔνια καὶ  
ἐνεγκεῖν. καὶ ἐν τῷ Σοφοκλέους Τηρεῖ ἡ τῆς κερκίδος  
1455 a φωνή. ἡ τρίτη διὰ μνήμης τῷ αἰσθέσθαι τι ἰδόντα, 5  
ὥσπερ ἡ ἐν Κυπρίοις τοῖς Δικαιογένοισι, ἰδὼν γὰρ τὴν  
γραφὴν ἔκλαυσεν, καὶ ἡ ἐν Ἀλκίνοῦ ἀπολόγῳ, ἀκούων  
γὰρ τοῦ κιθαριστοῦ καὶ μνησθεὶς ἐδάκρυσεν, ὅθεν ἀνεγνω-  
5 ρίσθησαν. τετάρτη δὲ ἡ ἐκ συλλογισμοῦ, οἶον ἐν 6  
Χορηφόροις, ὅτι ὁμοίος τις ἐλήλυθεν, ὁμοίος δὲ οὐθεὶς  
ἄλλ' ἢ ὁ Ὁρέστης, οὗτος ἄρα ἐλήλυθεν. καὶ ἡ Πολυ-  
εἶδου τοῦ σοφιστοῦ περὶ τῆς Ἰφιγενείας· εἰκὸς γὰρ τὸν  
Ὁρέστην συλλογίσασθαι, ὅτι ἢ τ' ἀδελφὴ ἐτύθη καὶ  
10 αὐτῷ συμβαίνει θύεσθαι. καὶ ἐν τῷ Θεοδέκτου Τυδεῖ,  
ὅτι ἐλθὼν ὡς εὐρήσων υἱὸν αὐτὸς ἀπόλλυται. καὶ ἡ ἐν  
τοῖς Φινειδαῖς, ἰδοῦσαι γὰρ τὸν τόπον συνελογίσαντο τὴν

34. <δ> Ὁρέστης Bywater: Ὁρέστης seclus. Diels sec. Arabem. ἀνεγνω-  
ρίσθη Spengel. 36. διὸ ἐγγύς τι Vahlen, cf. Arab. 'quam ob causam  
fit vicinum': διὸτι ἐγγύς Α°.

38. Alia Σ legisse videtur, 'haec sunt in  
eo quod dixit Sophocles se audisse vocem radii contempti' (Arabe); fort-  
τοιαύτη δ' ἐν τῷ Σοφοκλέους Τηρεῖ ἡ τῆς κερκίδος φωνή "ἄτιμος": unde  
W. R. Hardie conl. τοιαύτη δ' ἡ ἐν τῷ [Σοφοκλέους!] Τηρεῖ "τῆς ἀναύδου,"  
φησί, "κερκίδος φωνὴν κλύω." 39. ἡ τρίτη Spengel: ἦτοι τῇ Α°:  
τρίτῃ ἡ ἀπογρ. ἀχθεσθαι Gomperz. 1455 a 2. τοῖς ἀπογρ.: τῆς  
Α°.

3. ἀπολόγῳ ἀπογρ.: ἀπὸ λόγων Α°. 6. Χορηφόροις Vettori:  
χληφόροις Α°. 7. Πολυεἶδου ἀπογρ.: Πολυεἶδους Α°. 12. Φινειδαῖς  
Reiz: φινειδαῖς Α°.

made in one way by the nurse, in another by the herdsmen. The use of tokens for the express purpose of proof—and, indeed, any formal proof with or without tokens—is a less artistic mode of recognition. A better kind is that which comes about by a turn of incident, as in the Bath Scene in the *Odyssey*.

Next come the recognitions invented at will by the poet, and on that account wanting in art. For example, Orestes in the *Iphigenia* reveals the fact that he is Orestes. She, indeed, makes herself known by the letter; but he, by speaking himself, and saying what the poet, not what the plot requires. This, therefore, is nearly allied to the fault above mentioned:—for Orestes might as well have brought tokens with him. Another similar instance is the 'voice of the shuttle' in the *Tereus* of Sophocles.

1455 a The third kind depends on memory when the sight of some object awakens a feeling: as in the *Cyprians* of Dicaeogenes, where the hero breaks into tears on seeing the picture; or again in the 'Lay of Alcinous,' where Odysseus, hearing the minstrel play the lyre, recalls the past and weeps; and hence the recognition.

~~The fourth kind is by process of reasoning.~~ Thus in 6 the *Choephori*:—'Some one resembling me has come: no one resembles me but Orestes: therefore Orestes has come.' Such too is the discovery made by *Iphigenia* in the play of Polyeidus the Sophist. It was a natural reflection for Orestes to make, 'So I too must die at the altar like my sister.' So, again, in the *Tydeus* of Theodectes, the father says, 'I came to find my son, and I lose my own life.' So too in the *Phineidae*: the

- είμαρμένην ὅτι ἐν τούτῳ εἵμαρτο ἀποθανεῖν αὐταῖς, καὶ γὰρ ἐξετέθησαν ἐνταῦθα. ἔστιν δέ τις καὶ συνθετὴ ἐκ 7
- 15 παραλογισμοῦ τοῦ θατέρου, οἷον ἐν τῷ Ὀδυσσεὶ τῷ ψευδαγγέλῳ· ὁ μὲν γὰρ τὸ τόξον ἔφη γινώσcesθαι ὃ οὐχ ἑωράκει, τὸ δέ, ὡς δὴ ἐκείνου ἀναγνωριούντος διὰ τούτου, ἐποίησε παραλογισμόν. πασῶν δὲ βελτίστη ἀναγνώ- 8 ρισις ἡ ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων τῆς ἐκπλήξεως γιγνο-
- 20 μένης δι' εἰκότων, οἷον [ὁ] ἐν τῷ Σοφοκλέους Οἰδίποδι καὶ τῇ Ἰφιγενείᾳ· εἰκὸς γὰρ βούλεσθαι ἐπιθεῖναι γράμματα. αἱ γὰρ τοιαῦται μόναι ἄνευ τῶν πεποιημένων σημείων καὶ περιδεραιῶν. δεύτεραι δὲ αἱ ἐκ συλλογισμοῦ.
- XVII δεῖ δὲ τοὺς μύθους συνιστάναι καὶ τῇ λέξει συναπ- 25 εργάζεσθαι ὅτι μάλιστα πρὸ ὁμμάτων τιθέμενον· οὕτω γὰρ ἂν ἐναργέστατα [ὁ] ὁρῶν ὥσπερ παρ' αὐτοῖς γιγνόμενος τοῖς πραττομένοις εὐρίσκοι τὸ πρέπον καὶ ἥκιστα ἂν λανθάνοι [τὸ] τὰ ὑπεναντία. σημεῖον δὲ τούτου ὃ ἐπετιμᾶτο Καρκίνῳ· ὁ γὰρ Ἀμφιάραος ἐξ ἱεροῦ ἀνῆει,
- 30 ὃ μὴ ὁρῶντα [τὸν θεατὴν] ἐλάνθανεν, ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς σκηνῆς ἐξέπεσεν δυσχερανάντων τούτο τῶν θεατῶν. ὅσα δὲ δυνατὸν καὶ τοῖς σχήμασιν συναπεργαζόμενον. πιθανώ- 2 ται γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως οἱ ἐν τοῖς πάθεσίν
15. τοῦ θατέρου Bursian, praesunte Hermann: τοῦ θεάτρου codd. 16. ὁ μὲν apogr.: τὸ μὲν A<sup>c</sup>. 17. ὡς δὴ Tyrwhitt: ὡς δι' codd. 18. ἐποίησε Ald., Bekker: ποιῆσαι codd. Locus autem prope desperatus est. 'Multo plura legiase videtur Arabs quam nostri codices praebent' (Margoliouth). 19. ἐκπλήξεως apogr.: πλήξεως A<sup>c</sup>: τῆς ἐκπλήξεως . . . εἰκότων om. Arabs. 20. ὁ seclus. Vahlen: ἡ apogr. pauca. 22. αἱ γὰρ τοιαῦται . . . περιδεραιῶν seclus. Gomperz. 23. περιδεραιῶν apogr. (cf. 1454 b 27), Vahlen ed. 3: δεραιῶν A<sup>c</sup>: δεραιῶν Vahlen ed. 2. 24. συναπεργάζεσθαι: ἀπεργάζεσθαι Susemihl. 26. ἐναργέστατα apogr.: ἐνεργέστατα A<sup>c</sup>. ὁ om. Ald. 28. τὸ om. apogr. 29. ἀνῆει apogr.: ἂν εἴη A<sup>c</sup>. 30. ὁρῶντα codd.: ὁρῶντ' ἂν Vahlen. τὸν θεατὴν seclusi (simili errore Rhet. i. 2, 1358 a 8 τοὺς ἀκροατὰς in textum irrepsit): μὴ ὁρῶντ' α <ὁ> τὸν [θεατὴν] Gomperz, emendationis meae, credo, insecius: τὸν ποιητὴν Dacier, Susemihl. 33. ἀπ' αὐτῆς τῆς Tyrwhitt: codd. lect. confirmare videtur Arabs (Margoliouth).

women, on seeing the place, inferred their fate :—' Here we are doomed to die, for here we were cast forth.' Again, there is a recognition combined with a false inference on the part of one of the characters, as in the *Odysseus Disguised as a Messenger*. A man said he would know the bow,—which, however, he had not seen. This remark led *Odysseus* to imagine that the other would recognise him through the bow, thus suggesting a false inference.

But, of all recognitions, the best is that which arises from the incidents themselves, where the startling discovery is made by natural means. Such is that in the *Oedipus* of *Sophocles*, and in the *Iphigenia*; for it was natural that *Iphigenia* should wish to despatch a letter. These recognitions alone dispense with the artificial aid of tokens or necklaces. Next come the recognitions by process of reasoning.

XVII In constructing the plot and working it out with the proper diction, the poet should place the scene, as far as possible, before his eyes. In this way, seeing everything with the utmost vividness, as if he were a spectator of the action, he will discover what is in keeping with it, and be most unlikely to overlook inconsistencies. The need of such a rule is shown by the fault found in *Carcinus*. *Amphiaraus* was on his way from the temple. This fact escaped the observation of one who did not see the situation. On the stage, however, the piece failed, the audience being offended at the oversight.

Again, the poet should work out his play, to the best of his power, with appropriate gestures; for those who feel emotion are most convincing by force of



εἰσιν καὶ χειμαίνει ὁ χειμαζόμενος καὶ χαλεπαίνει ὁ  
 35 ὀργιζόμενος ἀληθινώτατα. διὸ εὐφροῦς ἡ ποιητικὴ  
 ἐστὶν ἡ μανικοῦ· τούτων γὰρ οἱ μὲν εὐπλαστοὶ οἱ  
 δὲ ἐκστατικοί· εἰσιν. τοὺς τε λόγους καὶ τοὺς 3  
 1455 b πεπονημένους δεῖ καὶ αὐτὸν ποιῶντα ἐκτίθεσθαι καθ-  
 ὅλου, εἴθ' οὕτως ἐπεισοδιοῦν καὶ παρατείνειν. λέγω δὲ  
 οὕτως ἂν θεωρεῖσθαι τὸ καθόλου, ὅλον τῆς Ἰφυγενείας·  
 τυθείσης τινὸς κόρης καὶ ἀφανισθείσης ἀδήλως τοῖς  
 5 θύσασιν, ἰδρυνθείσης δὲ εἰς ἄλλην χώραν, ἐν ἣ νόμος  
 ἦν τοὺς ξένους θύειν τῇ θεῷ, ταύτην ἔσχε τὴν ἱερω-  
 σύνην· χρόνῳ δὲ ὕστερον τῷ ἀδελφῷ συνέβη ἔλθεῖν  
 τῆς ἱερείας (τὸ δὲ ὅτι ἀνείλεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τινα αἰτίαν,  
 ἔξω τοῦ καθόλου [ἔλθεῖν ἐκεῖ], καὶ ἐφ' ὃ τι δέ, ἔξω τοῦ  
 10 μύθου), ἔλθων δὲ καὶ ληφθεὶς θύεσθαι μέλλων ἀνεγνώ-  
 ρισεν, εἴθ' ὥς Εὐριπίδης εἴθ' ὥς Πολύειδος ἐποίησεν,  
 κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς εἰπὼν ὅτι οὐκ ἄρα μόνον τὴν ἀδελφήν  
 ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸν ἔδει τυθῆναι, καὶ ἐντεύθεν ἡ σωτηρία.  
 μετὰ ταῦτα δὲ ἤδη ὑποθέντα τὰ ὀνόματα ἐπεισοδιοῦν, 4  
 15 ὅπως δὲ ἔσται οἰκεῖα τὰ ἐπεισόδια, ὅλον ἐν τῷ Ὁρέσῳ  
 ἡ μανία δι' ἧς ἐλήφθη καὶ ἡ σωτηρία διὰ τῆς καθάρ-  
 σεως. ἐν μὲν οὖν τοῖς δράμασιν τὰ ἐπεισόδια σύντομα, 5

36. Var. lect. εὐπλαστοὶ et ἀπλαστοὶ habuisse videtur Σ (Diels). 37.  
 ἐκστατικοὶ cod. Vettori: ἐξεταστικοὶ codd. τοὺτους τε τοὺς vel τοὺς  
 τε apogr.: τοὺτους τε A° (Vahlen, Christ), sed ne Graece quidem dicitur.  
 38. παρειλημμένους coni. Vahlen. 1455 b 2. παρατείνειν Vettori: περι-  
 τείνειν A°. 9. καθόλου: fort. μύθου Vahlen. 10. μύθου: fort.  
 καθόλου Vahlen. Secludendum videtur aut ἐλθεῖν ἐκεῖ (Bekker ed. 3) aut  
 ἔξω τοῦ καθόλου (Düntzer, Susemihl). ἀνεγνωρίσθη M. Schmidt, et  
 olim Vahlen. 17. δράμασιν (vel δρμασι) apogr.: δρμασιν A°.

sympathy. One who is agitated storms, one who is angry rages, with the most life-like reality. Hence poetry implies either a happy gift of nature or a strain of madness. In the one case a man can take the mould of any character; in the other, he is lifted out of his proper self.

As for the story, whether the poet takes it ready made or constructs it for himself, he should first sketch its general outline, and then fill in the episodes and amplify in detail. 3 The general plan may be illustrated by the Iphigenia. A young girl is sacrificed; she disappears mysteriously from the eyes of those who sacrificed her; she is transported to another country, where the custom is to offer up all strangers to the goddess. To this ministry she is appointed. Some time later her brother chances to arrive. The fact that the oracle for some reason ordered him to go there, is outside the general plan of the play. The purpose, again, of his coming is outside the action proper. However, he comes, he is seized, and, when on the point of being sacrificed, reveals who he is. The mode of recognition may be either that of Euripides or of Pelyeïdus, in whose play he exclaims very naturally:—'So it was not my sister only, but I too, who was doomed to be sacrificed'; and by that remark he is saved.

After this, the names being once given, it remains 4 to fill in the episodes. We must see that they are relevant to the action. In the case of Orestes, for example, there is the madness which led to his capture, and his deliverance by means of the purificatory rite. In the drama, the episodes are short, but it is these that 5

ἡ δ' ἐποποιία τούτοις μηκύνεται. τῆς γὰρ Ὀδυσσεΐας  
 <οὐ> μακρὸς ὁ λόγος ἐστίν· ἀποδημούντός τινος ἔτη  
 20 πολλὰ καὶ παραφυλαττομένου ὑπὸ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος καὶ  
 μόνου ὄντος, ἔτι δὲ τῶν οἴκοι οὕτως ἐχόντων ὥστε τὰ  
 χρήματα ὑπὸ μνηστήρων ἀναλίσκεσθαι καὶ τὸν υἱὸν  
 ἐπιβουλεύεσθαι, αὐτὸς δὲ ἀφικνεῖται χειμασθεὶς καὶ  
 ἀναγνωρίσας ὅτι αὐτὸς ἐπιθέμενος αὐτὸς μὲν ἐσώθη τοὺς  
 25 δ' ἐχθροὺς διέφθειρε. τὸ μὲν οὖν ἴδιον τοῦτο, τὰ δ'  
 ἄλλα ἐπέισόδια.

XVIII ἔστι δὲ πάσης τραγῳδίας τὸ μὲν δέσις τὸ δὲ λύσις,  
 τὰ μὲν ἔξωθεν καὶ ἔνια τῶν ἔσωθεν πολλάκις ἢ δέσις,  
 τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν ἢ λύσις. λέγω δὲ δέσιν μὲν εἶναι τὴν  
 30 ἀπ' ἀρχῆς μέχρι τούτου τοῦ μέρους ὃ ἔσχατόν ἐστιν  
 ἐξ οὗ μεταβαίνειν <εἰς δυστυχίαν συμβαίνει ἢ> εἰς  
 εὐτυχίαν, λύσιν δὲ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς μεταβάσεως  
 μέχρι τέλους· ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ Λυγκεῖ τῷ Θεοδέκτου δέσις  
 μὲν τὰ τε προπεπραγμένα καὶ ἡ τοῦ παιδίου λήψις  
 35 καὶ πάλιν † ἡ αὐτῶν δὴ \* \* † <λύσις δ' ἢ> ἀπὸ τῆς  
 αἰτιάσεως τοῦ θανάτου μέχρι τοῦ τέλους. τραγῳδίας δὲ 2  
 εἶδη εἰς τέσσαρα, [τοσαῦτα γὰρ καὶ τὰ μέρη ἐλέχθη,]  
 ἢ μὲν <ἀπλῇ ἢ δὲ> πεπλεγμένη, ἥς τὸ ὅλον ἐστὶν

19. μακρὸς apogr.: μακρὸς A°: 'sermo non est longus' Arabs, h. e. οὐ μακρὸς (Margoliouth). 20. παραφυλαττομένου . . . Ποσειδῶνος seclus. Castelvetro. 21. ἔτι apogr., Σ: ἐπεὶ A°. 23. δὴ coni. Vahlen: δὲ codd. 24. τινὰς αὐτὸς codd.: ὅτι αὐτὸς Bywater: τινὰς αὐτὸς olim seclusi: αὐτὸς seclus. Spengel. 28. πολλάκις post ἔξωθεν collocavit Ueberweg: codd. lect. confirmat Arabs (Margoliouth). 31. <εἰς δυστυχίαν συμβαίνει ἢ> Gomperz, alios secutus: <συμβαίνει ἢ ἐξ εὐτυχίας εἰς δυστυχίαν> addenda esse coni. Vahlen. 35. ἡ αὐτῶν δὴ <ἀπαγωγῇ, λύσις δ' ἢ> coni. Vahlen: ἡ αὐτῶν δὴ <λῶσις, λύσις δ' ἢ> Christ, quod confirmare videtur Arabs, 'et ea quae patefecit, solutio autem est quod fiebat' etc. (Margoliouth). 36. τοῦ θανάτου: fort. τοῦ Δαναοῦ (Vahlen et Spengel). 37. τοσαῦτα γὰρ . . . ἐλέχθη seclus. Susemihl ed. 1. τὰ μέρη: τὰ μύθων Tyrwhitt: τὰ μύθου Sus. ed. 2 sec. Ueberweg. 38. ἡ μὲν <ἀπλῇ ἢ δὲ> Zeller (cf. Vahlen, qui post ἀναγνώρισις 39 <ἢ δὲ ἀπλῇ> cum definitione deesse susp.).

give extension to Epic poetry. Thus the story of the Odyssey can be stated briefly. A certain man is absent from home for many years; he is jealously watched by Poseidon, and left desolate. Meanwhile his home is in a wretched plight—suitors are wasting his substance and plotting against his son. At length, tempest-tost, he arrives and reveals his true self; he attacks his enemies, destroys them and is himself preserved. This is the essence of the plot; the rest is episode.

III Every tragedy falls into two parts,—Complication and Unravelling (or *Dénouement*). Incidents extraneous to the action are frequently combined with a portion of the action proper, to form the Complication; the rest is the Unravelling. By the Complication I mean all that comes between the beginning of the action and the part which marks the turning-point to good or bad fortune. The Unravelling is that which comes between the beginning of the change and the end. Thus, in the Lynceus of Theodectes, the Complication consists of the incidents presupposed in the drama, the seizure of the child, and then again \* \* <The Unravelling> extends from the accusation of murder to the end.

There are four kinds of Tragedy,—first, the <Simple, 2 then> the Complex, depending entirely on Reversal and

περιπέτεια καὶ ἀναγνώρισις, ἡ δὲ παθητική, οἷον οἷ τε  
 1000 αἰλάντες καὶ οἱ Ἰξίονες, ἡ δὲ ἡθική, οἷον αἱ Φθιώτιδες  
 καὶ ὁ Πηλεΐδης. † τὸ δὲ τέταρτον ὅς † οἷον αἷ τε  
 Φορκίδες καὶ Προμηθεὺς καὶ ὅσα ἐν ᾄδῳ. μάλιστα 3  
 μὲν οὖν ἅπαντα δεῖ πειρᾶσθαι ἔχειν, εἰ δὲ μὴ, τὰ  
 5 μέγιστα καὶ πλείστα, ἄλλως τε καὶ ὥς νῦν συκοφαν-  
 τοῦσιν τοὺς ποιητάς· γεγονότων γὰρ καθ' ἕκαστον μέρος  
 ἀγαθῶν ποιητῶν, ἐκάστου τοῦ ἰδίου ἀγαθοῦ ἀξιοῦσι τὸν  
 ἕνα ὑπερβάλλειν. δίκαιον δὲ καὶ τραγωδῖαν ἄλλην καὶ  
 τὴν αὐτὴν λέγειν οὐδεν<ι> ἴσως <ὡς> τῷ μύθῳ· τοῦτο  
 10 δέ, ὧν ἡ αὐτὴ πλοκὴ καὶ λύσις. πολλοὶ δὲ πλέξαντες  
 εὐ λούσι κακῶς· δεῖ δὲ ἄμφω ἀεὶ κρατεῖσθαι. χρῆ 4  
 δὲ ὅπερ εἴρηται πολλάκις μεμνήσθαι καὶ μὴ ποιεῖν  
 ἐποποιικὸν σύστημα τραγωδῖαν. ἐποποιικὸν δὲ λέγω  
 [δέ] τὸ πολύμυθον, οἷον εἴ τις τὸν τῆς Ἰλιάδος ὅλον  
 15 ποιοῖ μῦθον. ἐκεῖ μὲν γὰρ διὰ τὸ μῆκος λαμβάνει τὰ  
 μέρη τὸ πρέπον μέγεθος, ἐν δὲ τοῖς δράμασι πολὺν παρὰ  
 τὴν ὑπόληψιν ἀποβαίνει. σημεῖον δέ, ὅσοι πέρσιν 5  
 Ἰλίου ὅλην ἐποίησαν καὶ μὴ κατὰ μέρος ὥσπερ Εὐ-  
 ρεπίδης, <ἡ> Νιόβην καὶ μὴ ὥσπερ Αἰσχύλος, ἡ ἐκ-  
 20 πίπτουσιν ἡ κακῶς ἀγωνίζονται, ἐπεὶ καὶ Ἀγάθων ἐξ-

1455 a 2. τὸ δὲ τέταρτον ὅς: τὸ δὲ τεταῶδες Schrader: τὸ δὲ τεταῶδες  
 <ἀλλότριον> Wecklein: τὸ δὲ τέταρτον <ἢ ἀπλῆ, οἷον \* \* παρέκβασις δὲ  
 ἢ τεταῶ> ὅς: Susseml: τὸ δὲ τέταρτον ὅς: (cf. 1455 a 6) Bywater; sed  
 τὰ εἴδη in hoc loco eodem utique esse debent quae in xxiv. 1. 5.  
 τε apogr.: γε Δ°. 7. ἐκάστου apogr.: ἕκαστου Δ°. 9. οὐδεὶς  
 ἴσως ὡς Bonitz: οὐδὲν ὡς Zeller: οὐδὲν ἴσως τῷ codd. τοῦτο: ταῦτό  
 Teichmüller: τῶν τε Bursian. 11. κρατεῖσθαι (cf. Polit. iv. (vii.) 13,  
 1331 b 38) Vahlen: habuit iam Σ, 'preparant utrumque' Arabs: κρο-  
 τεῖσθαι codd. 14. δὲ om. apogr. 19. † add. Vahlen: † Ἰοφῶν  
 Susseml, Spengel: pro Νιόβην, Ἐκείθεν coni. Valla, unde Ἐκείθεν  
 [καὶ . . . Αἰσχύλος,] Reinach.

Recognition; next, the Pathetic (where the motive is <sup>1456</sup> passion),—such as the tragedies on Ajax and Ixion; next, the Ethical (where the motives are ethical),—such as the Phthiotides and the Peleus. <We here exclude the supernatural kind>, such as the Phorcides, the Promethæus, and tragedies whose scene is in the lower world. The poet should endeavour, if possible, to 3 combine all poetic merits; or failing that, the greatest number and those the most important; the more so, in face of the cavilling criticism of the day. For whereas there have hitherto been good poets, each in his own branch, the critics now expect one man to surpass all others in their several lines of excellence. ✓

In speaking of a tragedy as the same or different, the best test to take is the plot. Identity exists where the Complication and Unravelling are the same. Many poets tie the knot well, but unravel it ill. Both arts, however, should always be mastered. ✓

Again, the poet should remember what has been often 4 said, and not make a Tragedy into an Epic structure. By an Epic structure I mean one with a multiplicity of plots: as if, for instance, you were to make a tragedy out of the entire story of the Iliad. In the Epic poem, owing to its length, each part assumes its proper magnitude. In the drama the result is far from answering to the poet's expectation. The proof is that 5 the poets who have dramatised the whole story of the Fall of Troy, instead of selecting portions, like Euripides; or who have taken the whole tale of Niobe, and not a part of her story, like Aeschylus, either fail utterly or meet with poor success on the stage. Even Agathon

έπεσεν ἐν τούτῳ μόνῳ· ἐν δὲ ταῖς περιπετείαις [καὶ ἐν  
τοῖς ἀπλοῖς πράγμασι] στοχάζεται ὧν βούλονται θαν-  
μαστῶς· τραγικὸν γὰρ τοῦτο καὶ φιλάνθρωπον. ἔστιν 6  
δὲ τοῦτο, ὅταν ὁ σοφὸς [μὲν] μετὰ ποιηρίας ἐξαπατηθῇ,  
25 ὥσπερ Σίσυφος, καὶ ὁ ἀνδρείος μὲν ἄδικος δὲ ἡττηθῇ.  
ἔστιν δὲ τοῦτο <καὶ> εἰκὸς ὥσπερ Ἀγάθων λέγει, εἰκὸς  
γὰρ γίνεσθαι πολλὰ καὶ παρὰ τὸ εἰκός. καὶ τὸν χορὸν 7  
δὲ ἓνα δεῖ ὑπολαβεῖν τῶν ὑποκριτῶν, καὶ μῦριον εἶναι  
τοῦ ὅλου καὶ συναγωνίζεσθαι μὴ ὥσπερ Εὐριπίδῃ ἀλλ'  
30 ὥσπερ Σοφοκλεῖ. τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς τὰ ἀδόμενα <οὐδὲν>  
μᾶλλον τοῦ μύθου ἢ ἄλλης τραγωδίας ἐστίν· διὸ ἐμ-  
βόλιμα ἄδουσιν πρῶτου ἄρξαντος Ἀγάθωνος τοῦ τοιού-  
του. καίτοι τί διαφέρει ἢ ἐμβόλιμα ἄδειν ἢ εἰ ῥῆσιν ἐξ  
ἄλλου εἰς ἄλλο ἀρμόττοι ἢ ἐπεισόδιον ὅλον;

XIX περὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν ἄλλων ἤδη εἴρηται, λοιπὸν δὲ  
36 περὶ λέξεως καὶ διανοίας εἰπεῖν. τὰ μὲν οὖν περὶ  
τὴν διάνοιαν ἐν τοῖς περὶ ῥητορικῆς κείσθω, τοῦτο γὰρ  
ἴδιον μᾶλλον ἐκείνης τῆς μεθόδου. ἔστι δὲ κατὰ τὴν  
διάνοιαν ταῦτα, ὅσα ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου δεῖ παρασκευασθῆναι.  
40 μέρη δὲ τούτων τό τε ἀποδεικνύναι καὶ τὸ λύειν καὶ τὸ 2  
1456 b πάθῃ παρασκευάζειν, οἷον ἔλεον ἢ φόβον ἢ ὀργὴν καὶ

21. καὶ ἐν . . . πράγμασι seclus. Susemihl: tuetur Arabs: pro ἀπλοῖς, ἄλλοις Tucker, collato 1451 b 36: διπλοῖς Twining: καὶ ἀπλῶς ἐν τοῖς πράγμασι Gomperz. 22. στοχάζεται Heinsius: στοχάζον-  
ται codd. 24. Aut secludendum μὲν (Margoliouth cum Arabe) aut legend. ὁ σοφὸς μὲν μετὰ ποιηρίας δὲ cum apogr. 26. εἰκὸς: <καὶ> εἰκὸς Susemihl, qui τραγικὸν . . . φιλάνθρωπον post ἡττηθῇ collocat: καὶ ante εἰκὸς confirm. Arabs. 29. ὥσπερ . . . ὥσπερ: ὥσπερ παρ' . . . ὥσπερ παρὰ Ald., Bekker. 30. λοιποῖς: πολλοῖς Margoliouth cum Arabe. ἀδόμενα Maggi, 'quae canuntur' Arabs: διδόμενα A<sup>c</sup>. οὐδὲν add. Vahlen, habuit iam Σ ('nihil . . . aliud amplius' Arabs): οὐ add. Maggi. 32. τοιούτου: 'poeta' Arabs, ποιητοῦ Σ, ut videtur. 35. ἤδη apogr.: ἡδ' A<sup>c</sup>: εἰδεῶν ut videtur Σ (Margoliouth). 36. καὶ Hermann: ἢ codd. 41. πάθῃ seclus. Bernays, tuetur Arabs.

has been known to fail from this one defect. In his Reversals of the Action, however, he shows a marvellous skill in the effort to hit the popular taste,—to produce a tragic effect that satisfies the moral sense. This effect is 6 produced when the clever rogue, like Sisyphus, is outwitted, or the brave villain defeated. Such an event is, moreover, probable in Agathon's sense of the word: 'it is probable,' he says, 'that many things should happen contrary to probability.'

The Chorus too should be regarded as one of the 7 actors; it should be an integral part of the whole, and share in the action, in the manner not of Euripides but of Sophocles. As for the later poets, their choral songs pertain as little to the subject of the piece as to that of any other tragedy. They are, therefore, sung as mere interludes,—a practice first begun by Agathon. Yet what difference is there between introducing such choral interludes, and transferring a speech, or even a whole act, from one play to another?

XIX It remains to speak of Diction and Thought, the other parts of Tragedy having been already discussed. Concerning Thought, we may assume what is said in the Rhetoric, to which inquiry the subject more strictly belongs. Under Thought is included every effect which has to be produced by speech; in particular,— 2 proof and refutation; the excitation of the feelings, such as pity, fear, anger, and the like; the suggestion of



ὅσα τοιαῦτα, καὶ ἔτι μέγεθος καὶ μικρότητος. δῆλον 3  
 δὲ ὅτι καὶ [ἐν] τοῖς πράγμασιν ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἰδεῶν  
 δεῖ χρῆσθαι, ὅταν ἡ ἐλεεινὰ ἡ δεινὰ ἡ μεγάλα ἡ εἰκότα  
 5 δέῃ παρασκευάζειν· πλὴν τοσοῦτον διαφέρει, ὅτι τὰ μὲν  
 δεῖ φαίνεσθαι ἄνευ διδασκαλίας, τὰ δὲ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ ὑπὸ  
 τοῦ λέγοντος παρασκευάζεσθαι καὶ παρὰ τὸν λόγον  
 γίνεσθαι. τί γὰρ ἂν εἴη τοῦ λέγοντος ἔργον, εἰ φαίνοιτο  
 ἤδη ἂ δεῖ καὶ μὴ διὰ τὸν λόγον; τῶν δὲ περὶ τὴν 4  
 10 λέξιν ἐν μὲν ἐστὶν εἶδος θεωρίας τὰ σχήματα τῆς  
 λέξεως, ἃ ἐστὶν εἰδέναί τῆς ὑποκριτικῆς καὶ τοῦ τὴν  
 τοιαύτην ἔχοντος ἀρχιτεκτονικῆν, οἷον τί ἐντολὴ καὶ  
 τί εὐχὴ καὶ διήγησις καὶ ἀπειλὴ καὶ ἐρώτησις καὶ  
 ἀπόκρισις καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο τοιοῦτον. παρὰ γὰρ τὴν 5  
 15 τούτων γνώσιν ἡ ἄγνοϊαν οὐδὲν εἰς τὴν ποιητικὴν  
 ἐπιτίμημα φέρεται ὅ τι καὶ ἄξιον σπουδῆς. τί γὰρ  
 ἂν τις ὑπολάβοι ἡμαρτηθῆναι ἂν Πρωταγόρας ἐπιτιμᾷ,  
 ὅτι εὐχέσθαι οἰόμενος ἐπιτάττει εἰπὼν “μῆνιν ἄειδε  
 θεά,” τὸ γὰρ κελεύσαι φησὶν ποιεῖν τι ἢ μὴ ἐπίταξις  
 20 ἐστίν. διὸ παρείσθω ὡς ἄλλης καὶ οὐ τῆς ποιητικῆς  
 ὄν θεώρημα.

XX [τῆς δὲ λέξεως ἀπάσης τάδ' ἐστὶ τὰ μέρη, στοιχείον  
 συλλαβῇ σύνδεσμος ὄνομα ῥῆμα [ἄρθρον] πτώσις λόγος.  
 στοιχείον μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν φωνὴ ἀδιαίρετος, οὐ πᾶσα δὲ ἄλλ' 2

1456 b 2. μικρότητος A<sup>o</sup>: σμικρότητα apogr. 3. ἐν seclus. Ueberweg  
 (cf. Spengel). ἰδεῶν apogr.: εἰδεῶν A<sup>o</sup>. 8. φαίνοιτο scripsi:  
 φανοῖτο codd. 9. ἤδη ἂ δεῖ Tyrwhitt: ἤδη Castelvetro: ἤδη δι'  
 αὐτὰ Susemihl: ἤδη τῇ θεᾷ Gomperz (praesunte Spengel): ἡδέα codd.,  
 Vahlen ed. 3: ἡ δέα Vahlen ed. 2. 23. ἄρθρον cum Hartung  
 seclusi (cf. Susemihl), sed eo dubitantius quod proprio loco post σύνδεσμος  
 hoc verbum statuisset videtur Σ (cf. Arab.): transposuit iam Spengel:  
 σύνδεσμος <ἡ> ἄρθρον ὄνομα ῥῆμα Steinthal.

importance or its opposite. Further, it is evident that 3 the dramatic incidents must be treated from the same points of view as the dramatic speeches, when the object is to evoke the sense of pity, fear, importance, or probability. The only difference is, that the incidents should speak for themselves without verbal exposition; while the effects aimed at in a speech should be produced by the speaker, and as a result of the speech. For what were the need of a speaker, if the proper impression were at once conveyed, quite apart from what he says?

Next, as regards Diction. One branch of the inquiry 4 treats of the Modes of Expression. But this province of knowledge belongs to the art of Declamation, and to the masters of that science. It includes, for instance, —what is a command, a prayer, a narrative, a threat, a question, an answer, and so forth. To know or not 5 to know these things involves no serious censure upon the poet's art. For who can admit the fault imputed to Homer by Protagoras,—that in the words, 'Sing, goddess, of the wrath,' he gives a command under the idea that he utters a prayer? For to tell some one to do a thing or not to do it is, he says, a command. We may, therefore, pass this over as an inquiry that belongs to another art, not to poetry.

XX [Language in general includes the following parts:—the Letter, the Syllable, the Connecting word, the Noun, the Verb, the Inflexion or Case, the Proposition or Phrase.

A Letter is an indivisible sound, yet not every such 2 sound, but only one which can form part of a group of

25 ἐξ ἧς πέφυκε συνθετὴ γίνεσθαι φωνή· καὶ γὰρ τῶν θηρίων  
 εἰσὶν ἀδιαίρετοι φωναὶ ὧν οὐδεμίαν λέγω στοιχεῖον.  
 ταύτης δὲ μέρη τό τε φωνήεν καὶ τὸ ἡμίφωνον καὶ 3  
 ἄφωνον. ἔστιν δὲ φωνήεν μὲν <τὸ> ἄνευ προσβολῆς  
 ἔχον φωνὴν ἀκουστήν, ἡμίφωνον δὲ τὸ μετὰ προσβολῆς  
 30 ἔχον φωνὴν ἀκουστήν, οἷον τὸ Σ καὶ τὸ Ρ, ἄφωνον δὲ  
 τὸ μετὰ προσβολῆς καθ' αὐτὸ μὲν οὐδεμίαν ἔχον φωνήν,  
 μετὰ δὲ τῶν ἐχόντων τινὰ φωνὴν γινόμενον ἀκουστόν,  
 οἷον τὸ Γ καὶ τὸ Δ. ταῦτα δὲ διαφέρει σχήμασιν τε 4  
 τοῦ στόματος καὶ τόποις καὶ δασύτητι καὶ ψιλότητι  
 35 καὶ μήκει καὶ βραχύτητι, ἔτι δὲ ὀξύτητι καὶ βαρύτητι  
 καὶ τῷ μέσῳ· περὶ ὧν καθ' ἕκαστον ἐν τοῖς μετρικοῖς  
 προσήκει θεωρεῖν. συλλαβὴ δέ ἐστιν φωνὴ ἄσημος 5  
 συνθετὴ ἐξ ἀφώνου \* \* καὶ φωνῆς ἔχοντος. καὶ γὰρ  
 τὸ ΓΡ <οὐκ> ἄνευ τοῦ Α συλλαβὴ ἀλλὰ μετὰ τοῦ Α,  
 40 οἷον τὸ ΓΡΑ. ἀλλὰ καὶ τούτων θεωρῆσαι τὰς διαφορὰς  
 τῆς μετρικῆς ἐστίν. σύνδεσμος δέ ἐστιν φωνὴ ἄσημος 6  
 1457 a ἢ οὔτε κωλύει οὔτε ποιεῖ φωνὴν μίαν σημαντικὴν ἐκ  
 πλειόνων φωνῶν, πεφυκυῖα [συν]τίθεσθαι καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν

25. συνθετὴ apogr., Arabs 'compositae voci': } συνθετὴ Δ<sup>c</sup>. 38. Post  
 ἀφώνου intercidisse videtur <ἢ ἐξ ἀφώνου καὶ ἡμιφώνου>. Post φωνὴν  
 ἔχοντος ooni. Christ <ἢ πλειόνων ἀφώνων καὶ φωνῆς ἔχοντος>. καὶ  
 γὰρ τὸ ΓΡ ἄνευ τοῦ Α συλλαβὴ καὶ μετὰ τοῦ Α, Δ<sup>c</sup>: 'nam Γ et  
 Ρ sine Α non faciunt syllabam, quoniam tantum fiunt syllaba cum Α'  
 Arabs (Margolionth), unde restituit Sussemihl quod in textum recepi:  
 καὶ γὰρ τὸ ΓΑ ἄνευ τοῦ Ρ συλλαβὴ καὶ μετὰ τοῦ Ρ Tytwhitt: καὶ γὰρ  
 τὸ Α ἄνευ τοῦ ΓΡ συλλαβὴ καὶ μετὰ τοῦ ΓΡ M. Schmidt. 1457 a 1-8.  
 Locus valde impeditus. Codicum fide ita vulgo legitur: ἢ οὔτε κωλύει  
 οὔτε ποιεῖ φωνὴν μίαν σημαντικὴν, ἐκ πλειόνων φωνῶν πεφυκυῖα συντί-  
 θεσθαι, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄκρων καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μέσου, ἢ μὴ ἀρμόττα (ἢ μὴ  
 ἀρμόττα apogr., Bekker) ἐν ἀρχῇ τίθεσθαι καθ' αὐτόν (αὐτῶν Tytwhitt),  
 οἷον μὲν, ἦτοι, δέ (vel δέ). ἢ φωνὴ ἄσημος ἢ ἐκ πλειόνων μὲν φωνῶν  
 μιᾶς σημαντικῶν (σημαντικῶν Δ<sup>c</sup>) δὲ τοιαύτῃ πέφυκεν μίαν σημαντικὴν φωνήν.  
 ἀφώνον δ' ἐστὶ φωνὴν ἄσημον, ἢ λόγον ἀρχῆς ἢ τέλος ἢ διαμεσίων διπλα-  
 οἷον τὸ ἀμφὶ (ἄ μ ἰ Δ<sup>c</sup>: φωνὴ Ald., Bekker) καὶ τὸ περὶ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα.

sounds. For even brutes utter indivisible sounds, none of which I call a letter. The sound I mean may be 3 either a vowel, a semi-vowel, or a mute. A vowel is that which without impact of tongue or lip has an audible sound. A semi-vowel, that which with such impact has an audible sound, as S and R. A mute, that which with such impact has by itself no sound, but joined to a vowel sound becomes audible, as G and D. These are distinguished according to the form 4 assumed by the mouth, and the place where they are produced; according as they are aspirated or smooth, long or short; as they are acute, grave, or of an intermediate tone; which inquiry belongs in detail to a treatise on metre.

A Syllable is a non-significant sound, composed of a 5 mute and a vowel <or of a mute, a semi-vowel> and a vowel: for GR without A is not a syllable, but with A it is,—GRA. But the investigation of these differences belongs also to metrical science.

A Connecting word is a non-significant sound, which 6  
 1457 a neither causes nor hinders the union of many sounds into one significant sound; it may be placed at either

In Ed. 1 secutus sum Susemihl (praeunte Hartung), nec quicquam hic mutavi. Sed nescio an Döring verum viderit qui locum sic restituit: σύνδεσμος δὲ ἐστὶν φωνὴ ἀσημος ἢ ἐκ πλείων μὲν φωνῶν, μᾶς σημαντικῶν δὲ ποιεῖν πέφυκεν μίαν σημαντικὴν φωνήν, ἣν μὴ ἀρμόττει ἐν ἀρχῇ λόγου τίθεσθαι καθ' αὐτήν, οἷον τὸ ἀμφὶ καὶ τὸ περὶ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα. ἄρθρον δ' ἐστὶ φωνὴ ἀσημος, ἣ οὔτε κωλύει οὔτε ποιεῖ φωνήν μίαν σημαντικὴν ἐκ πλείων φωνῶν [πεφυκυῖαν] συντίθεσθαι, <ἀλλ'> ἢ λόγου ἀρχὴν ἢ τέλος ἢ διορισμὸν δηλοῦν, πεφυκυῖα τίθεσθαι καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀκρῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μέσου, οἷον μέν, ἦρα, δέ. Nullam tamen Arabis rationem Döring habuit, et Arabs quidem cum nostris codicibus parum congruit. Ipse ut in re nondum satis explicata ἐπέχειν me fateor. 2. πεφυκυῖα τίθεσθαι Winsanley: πεφυκυῖαν συντίθεσθαι codd.

ἄκρων καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μέσου· ἡ φωνὴ ἄσημος ἢ ἐκ πλειόνων  
 μὲν φωνῶν μιᾶς, σημαντικῶν δέ, ποιεῖν πέφυκεν μίαν  
 5 σημαντικὴν φωνήν, οἷον τὸ ἀμφὶ καὶ τὸ περὶ καὶ τὰ  
 ἄλλα· <ἡ> φωνὴ ἄσημος ἢ λόγου ἀρχὴν ἢ τέλος ἢ ἡ  
 διορισμὸν δηλοῖ, ἣν μὴ ἀρμόττει ἐν ἀρχῇ λόγου τιθέναι  
 καθ' αὐτήν, οἷον μέν, ἦτοι, δέ. [ἡ φωνὴ ἄσημος ἢ  
 οὔτε κωλύει οὔτε ποιεῖ φωνήν μίαν σημαντικὴν ἐκ  
 10 πλειόνων φωνῶν πεφυκυῖα τίθεσθαι καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄκρων  
 καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μέσου.] ὄνομα δέ ἐστι φωνὴ συνθετὴ 8  
 σημαντικὴ ἄνευ χρόνου ἧς μέρος οὐδὲν ἐστι καθ' αὐτὸ  
 σημαντικόν· ἐν γὰρ τοῖς διπλοῖς οὐ χρώμεθα ὥς καὶ  
 αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ σημαίνει, οἷον ἐν τῷ Θεοδώρῳ τὸ δῶρον  
 15 οὐ σημαίνει. ῥήμα δὲ φωνὴ συνθετὴ σημαντικὴ μετὰ 9  
 χρόνου ἧς οὐδὲν μέρος σημαίνει καθ' αὐτό, ὥσπερ καὶ  
 ἐπὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων· τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἄνθρωπος ἢ λευκόν οὐ  
 σημαίνει τὸ πότε, τὸ δὲ βαδίζει ἢ βεβάδικεν προσ-  
 σημαίνει τὸ μὲν τὸν παρόντα χρόνον τὸ δὲ τὸν παρ-  
 20 ἐληλυθότα. πτώσις δ' ἐστὶν ὀνόματος ἢ ῥήματος ἢ 10  
 μὲν τὸ κατὰ τὸ τούτου ἢ τούτῳ σημαίνει καὶ ὅσα  
 τοιαῦτα, ἢ δὲ κατὰ τὸ ἐνὶ ἢ πολλοῖς, οἷον ἄνθρωποι  
 ἢ ἄνθρωπος, ἢ δὲ κατὰ τὰ ὑποκριτικά, οἷον κατ'  
 ἐρώτησιν, ἐπίταξιν· τὸ γὰρ <ἄρ> ἐβάδισεν ἢ βάδιζε  
 25 πτώσις ῥήματος κατὰ ταῦτα τὰ εἶδη ἐστίν. λόγος δὲ 11  
 φωνὴ συνθετὴ σημαντικὴ ἧς ἔνια μέρη καθ' αὐτὰ  
 σημαίνει τι· οὐ γὰρ ἅπας λόγος ἐκ ῥημάτων καὶ  
 ὀνομάτων σύγκειται, οἷον “ὁ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὀρισμός”·  
 ἀλλ' ἐνδέχεται <καὶ> ἄνευ ῥημάτων εἶναι λόγον. μέρος

8-11. ἡ . . . μέσου seclus. Reiz, Hermann.

18. ποτὲ Spengel.

βαδίζει apogr.: βαδίζειν A°.

21. Alterum τὸ add. apogr.

24.

ἄρ' add. Vahlen.

βάδιζε apogr.: ἐβάδιζεν A°.

29. καὶ add.

Gomperz, quem secutus sum etiam in loci interpunctione.

end or in the middle of a sentence. Or, a non-significant sound, which out of several sounds, each of them significant, is capable of forming one significant sound,—as *ἀμφί*, *περί*, and the like. Or, a non-significant sound,<sup>7</sup> which marks the beginning, end, or division of a sentence; such, however, that it cannot correctly stand by itself at the beginning of a sentence,—as *μέν*, *ἦτοι*, *δέ*.

A Noun is a composite significant sound, not marking<sup>8</sup> time, of which no part is in itself significant; for in double or compound words we do not employ the separate parts as if each were in itself significant. Thus in Theodorus, 'god-given,' the *δῶρον* or 'gift' is not in itself significant.

A Verb is a composite significant sound, marking<sup>9</sup> time, in which, as in the noun, no part is in itself significant. For 'man,' or 'white' does not express the idea of 'when'; but 'he walks,' or 'he has walked' does connote time, present or past.

Inflexion belongs both to the noun and verb, and<sup>10</sup> expresses either the relation 'of,' 'to,' or the like; or that of number, whether one or many, as 'man' or 'men'; or the modes or tones in actual delivery, e.g. a question or a command. 'Did he go?' and 'go' are verbal inflexions of this kind.

A Proposition or Phrase is a composite significant<sup>11</sup> sound, some at least of whose parts are in themselves significant; for not every such group of words consists of verbs and nouns—'the definition of man,' for example—but it may dispense even with the verb. Still it will

30 μέντοι αἰί τι σημαῖνον ἔξει, οἶον “ἐν τῷ βαδίζειν,”  
 “Κλέων ὁ Κλέωνος.” εἰς δέ ἐστι λόγος διχῶς, ἡ γὰρ 1:  
 ὁ ἐν σημαίνων, ἡ ὁ ἐκ πλειόνων συνδέσμφ, οἶον ἡ  
 Ἰλιάς μὲν συνδέσμφ εἰς, ὁ δὲ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τῷ ἐν  
 σημαίνειν.]

XXI ὀνόματος δὲ εἶδη τὸ μὲν ἀπλοῦν, ἀπλοῦν δὲ λέγω δ  
 36 μὴ ἐκ σημαινόντων σύγκειται, οἶον γῆ, τὸ δὲ διπλοῦν·  
 τούτου δὲ τὸ μὲν ἐκ σημαίνοντος καὶ ἀσήμου (πλὴν  
 οὐκ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι σημαίνοντος [καὶ ἀσήμου]), τὸ δὲ ἐκ  
 σημαινόντων σύγκειται. εἴη δ' ἂν καὶ τριπλοῦν καὶ  
 40 τετραπλοῦν ὄνομα καὶ πολλαπλοῦν, οἶον τὰ πολλὰ  
 1457 b τῶν Μασσαλιωτῶν· Ἑρμοκαϊκόξανθος <ἐπευξάμενος Διὶ  
 ( πατρί>. ἅπαν δὲ ὀνομά ἐστιν ἡ κύριον ἡ γλῶττα ἡ 2  
 μεταφορὰ ἡ κόσμος ἡ πεποιημένον ἡ ἐπεκτεταμένον ἡ  
 ( ὑψηρῆμένον ἡ ἐξηλλαγμένον. λέγω δὲ κύριον μὲν φ 3  
 5 χρῶνται ἕκαστοι, γλῶτταν δὲ φ ἕτεροι, ὥστε φανερόν  
 ὅτι καὶ γλῶτταν καὶ κύριον εἶναι δυνατόν τὸ αὐτό, μὴ  
 τοῖς αὐτοῖς δέ· τὸ γὰρ σίγυνον Κυπρίοις μὲν κύριον,  
 ἡμῖν δὲ γλῶττα. μεταφορὰ δὲ ἐστιν ὀνόματος ἀλλοτριῶν 4  
 ἐπιφορὰ ἡ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους ἐπὶ εἶδος ἡ ἀπὸ τοῦ

30. βαδίζειν A<sup>o</sup>: βαδίζει apogr. 31. Κλέων ὁ Κλέων codd.: τὸ Κλέων  
 Bigg: οἶον ἐν τῷ “βαδίζει Κλέων” ὁ Κλέων plerique edd.: οἶον “ἐν τῷ  
 βαδίζειν,” “Κλέων ὁ Κλέωνος” M. Schmidt: (habuit Σ Κλέωνος). 32.  
 συνδέσμφ apogr.: συνδέσμων A<sup>o</sup>. 33. τῷ apogr.: τὸ A<sup>o</sup>. 38.  
 ἐντὸς τοῦ ὀνόματος Tucker. ὀνόματι Vahlen, Σ: ὀνόματος A<sup>o</sup>.  
 καὶ ἀσήμου om. iam Σ, ut videtur (‘non tamen indicans in nomine’  
 Arabs). Idem efficit Ussing deleto καὶ ἀσήμου in v. 33, mutata quoque  
 interpunctione, ἐκ σημαίνοντος, πλὴν οὐκ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι σημαίνοντος, καὶ  
 ἀσήμου, . . . 41. μεγαλιωτῶν codd.: Μασσαλιωτῶν Diels, qui collato  
 Arabe (‘sicut multa de Massiliotis Hermocaicoxanthus qui supplicabatur  
 dominum caelorum’) totum versum Ἑρμοκ . . . πατρί tanquam epici  
 carminis, comice scripti, ex coniectura restituit. Ἑρμοκ. ad Phocaeam  
 spectat, Massiliae μητρόπολιν, urbem inter Hermum et Caicum sitam.  
 Ceteras emendationes licet iam missas facere, e.g. μεγαλείων ὡς Win-  
 stanley: μεγαλείων οἶον Bekker ed. 3: μεγαλείων ὦν Vahlen. 1457 b 4.  
 ἀψηρῆμένον Spengel (cf. 1458 a 1).

always have some significant part, as 'in walking,' or 'Cleon son of Cleon.' A proposition or phrase may form 12 a unity in two ways,—either as signifying one thing, or as consisting of several parts linked together. Thus the Iliad is one by the linking together of parts, the definition of man by the unity of the thing signified.]

XXI Words are of two kinds, simple and double. By simple I mean those composed of non-significant elements, such as γῆ. By double or compound, those composed either of a significant and non-significant element (though within the whole word no element is significant), or of elements that are both significant. A word may likewise be triple, quadruple, or multiple in form, like 1487 b so many Massilian expressions, e.g. 'Hermo-caico-xanthus <who prayed to Father Zeus.>

Every word is either current, or strange, or metaphorical, 2 or ornamental, or newly-coined, or lengthened, or contracted, or altered.

By a current or proper word I mean one which is 3 in general use among a people; by a strange word, one which is in use in another country. Plainly, therefore, the same word may be at once strange and current, but not in relation to the same people. The word σίγυρον, 'lance,' is to the Cyprians a current term but to us a strange one.

Metaphor is the application of an alien name by 4 transference either from genus to species, or from species



- 10 εἶδους ἐπὶ τὸ γένος ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ εἶδους ἐπὶ εἶδος ἢ  
κατὰ τὸ ἀνάλογον. λέγω δὲ ἀπὸ γένους μὲν ἐπὶ εἶδος, 5  
οἶον “νηὺς δέ μοι ἦδ’ ἔστηκεν.” τὸ γὰρ ὀρμεῖν ἐστὶν  
ἐστάναι τι. ἀπ’ εἶδους δὲ ἐπὶ γένος, “ἢ δὴ μυρί’  
Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐσθλὰ ἔοργεν.” τὸ γὰρ μυρίον πολὺ <τί>  
15 ἐστὶν, φ’ νῦν ἀντὶ τοῦ πολλοῦ κέχρηται. ἀπ’ εἶδους δὲ  
ἐπὶ εἶδος οἶον “χαλκῷ ἀπὸ ψυχὴν ἀρύσας” καὶ “ταμῶν  
ἀτειρεὶ χαλκῷ.” ἐνταῦθα γὰρ τὸ μὲν ἀρύσαι ταμεῖν, τὸ  
δὲ ταμεῖν ἀρύσαι εἴρηκεν· ἄμφω γὰρ ἀφελεῖν τί ἐστὶν.  
τὸ δὲ ἀνάλογον λέγω, ὅταν ὁμοίως ἔχῃ τὸ δεύτερον 6  
20 πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον καὶ τὸ τέταρτον πρὸς τὸ τρίτον· ἐρεῖ  
γὰρ ἀντὶ τοῦ δευτέρου τὸ τέταρτον ἢ ἀντὶ τοῦ τετάρτου  
τὸ δεύτερον, καὶ ἐνίοτε προστιθέασιν ἀνθ’ οὗ λέγει πρὸς  
ὃ ἐστὶ. λέγω δὲ οἶον ὁμοίως ἔχει φιάλη πρὸς Διόνυσον  
καὶ ἀσπίς πρὸς Ἄρη· ἐρεῖ τοίνυν τὴν φιάλην ἀσπίδα  
25 Διονύσου καὶ τὴν ἀσπίδα φιάλην Ἄρεως. ἢ δ’ γῆρας πρὸς  
βίον, καὶ ἐσπέρα πρὸς ἡμέραν· ἐρεῖ τοίνυν τὴν ἐσπέραν  
γῆρας ἡμέρας καὶ τὸ γῆρας ἐσπέραν βίου ἢ, ὥσπερ  
Ἐμπεδοκλῆς, δυσμᾶς βίου. ἐνίοις δ’ οὐκ ἐστὶν ὄνομα 7  
κείμενον τῶν ἀνάλογον, ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν ἦττον ὁμοίως λεχθή-  
30 σεται· οἶον τὸ τὸν καρπὸν μὲν ἀφιέναι σπείρειν, τὸ δὲ  
τὴν φλόγα ἀπὸ τοῦ ἡλίου ἀνώνυμον· ἀλλ’ ὁμοίως ἔχει  
τοῦτο πρὸς τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὸ σπείρειν πρὸς τὸν καρπὸν,  
διὸ εἴρηται “σπείρων θεοκτίσταν φλόγα.” ἐστὶ δὲ τῷ 8  
τρόπῳ τούτῳ τῆς μεταφορᾶς χρῆσθαι καὶ ἄλλως, προσ-  
35 αγορεύσαντα τὸ ἀλλότριον ἀποφῆσαι τῶν οἰκείων τι,

10. τὸ om. apogr.

14. τί add. Twining.

27. ἡμέρας . . .

δυσμᾶς apogr.: ἡμέρας ἢ ὥσπερ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς καὶ τὸ γῆρας ἐσπέραν βίου ἢ  
δυσμᾶς βίου A<sup>o</sup>, Vahlen.29. τῶν A<sup>o</sup>: τὸ apogr., Bekker.

32.

&lt;τὸν ἀφέντα&gt; τὸν καρπὸν Castelvetro.

to genus, or from species to species, or by analogy, that is, proportion. Thus from genus to species, as: 'There lies 5 my ship'; for lying at anchor is a species of lying. From species to genus, as: 'Verily ten thousand noble deeds hath Odysseus wrought'; for ten thousand is a species of large number, and is here used for a large number generally. From species to species, as: 'With blade of bronze drew away the life,' and 'Cleft the water with the vessel of unyielding bronze.' Here *ἀρύσαι*, 'to draw away,' is used for *ραμεῖν*, 'to cleave,' and *ραμεῖν* again for *ἀρύσαι*,—each being a species of taking away. Analogy or proportion is, when the second term is to the 6 first as the fourth to the third. We may then use the fourth for the second, or the second for the fourth. Sometimes too we qualify the metaphor by adding the term to which the proper word is relative. Thus the cup is to Dionysus as the shield to Ares. The cup may, therefore, be called 'the shield of Dionysus,' and the shield 'the cup of Ares.' Or, again, as old age is to life, so is evening to day. Evening may therefore be called 'the old age of the day,' and old age, 'the evening of life' or, in the phrase of Empedocles, 'life's setting sun.' In some cases one of the terms of the proportion has no 7 specific name; still, the metaphor may be used. For instance, to scatter seed is called sowing: but the action of the sun in scattering his rays is nameless. Still this process bears to the sun the same relation as sowing to the seed. Hence the expression of the poet, 'sowing the god-created light.' There is another way in which this 8 kind of metaphor may be employed. We may apply an alien term, and then deny of that term one of its proper

οιον εἰ τὴν ἀσπίδα εἴποι φιάλην μὴ Ἄρεως ἀλλ' ἄοιον.  
 πεποιημένον δ' ἐστὶν ὃ ὅλως μὴ καλούμενον ὑπὸ τινῶν 9  
 αὐτὸς τίθεται ὁ ποιητής, δοκεῖ γὰρ ἕνια εἶναι τοιαῦτα,  
 οἶον τὰ κέρατα ἐρνούγας καὶ τὸν ἱερέα ἀρητῆρα. ἐπεκ- 10  
 1458 a τεταμένον δέ ἐστιν ἡ ἀφηρημένον τὸ μὲν ἐὰν φωνήεντι  
 μακροτέρῳ κεχρημένον ἢ τοῦ οἰκείου ἢ συλλαβῇ ἐμβε-  
 βλημένη, τὸ δὲ ἂν ἀφηρημένον τι ἢ αὐτοῦ, ἐπεκτεταμένον  
 μὲν οἶον τὸ πόλεως πόλῃος καὶ τὸ Πηλέος <Πηλῆος καὶ  
 5 τὸ Πηλείδου> Πηληιάδεω, ἀφηρημένον δὲ οἶον τὸ κρῖ καὶ  
 τὸ δῶ καὶ "μία γίνεται ἀμφοτέρων ὄψ." ἐξηλλαγμένον 11  
 δ' ἐστὶν ὅταν τοῦ ὀνομαζομένου τὸ μὲν καταλείπη τὸ δὲ  
 ποιῇ, οἶον τὸ "δεξιτερὸν κατὰ μαζόν" ἀντὶ τοῦ δεξιόν.

[αὐτῶν δὲ τῶν ὀνομάτων τὰ μὲν ἄρρενα τὰ δὲ θήλεα 12  
 10 τὰ δὲ μεταξύ, ἄρρενα μὲν ὅσα τελευτᾷ εἰς τὸ Ν καὶ Ρ  
 καὶ Σ καὶ ὅσα ἐκ τούτου σύγκειται, ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶν δύο,  
 Ψ καὶ Ξ, θήλεα δὲ ὅσα ἐκ τῶν φωνηέντων εἰς τε τὰ ἀεὶ  
 μακρά, οἶον εἰς Η καὶ Ω, καὶ τῶν ἐπεκτεινομένων εἰς Α·  
 ὥστε ἴσα συμβαίνει πλήθει εἰς ὅσα τὰ ἄρρενα καὶ τὰ  
 15 θήλεα. τὸ γὰρ Ψ καὶ τὸ Ξ ταῦτά ἐστιν. εἰς δὲ ἄφωνον  
 οὐδὲν ὄνομα τελευτᾷ, οὐδὲ εἰς φωνήεν βραχύ. εἰς δὲ τὸ  
 Ι τρία μόνον, μέλι κόμμι πέπερι. εἰς δὲ τὸ Τ πέντε.  
 τὰ δὲ μεταξὺ εἰς ταῦτα καὶ Ν καὶ Σ.]

XXII λέξεως δὲ ἀρετὴ σαφὴ καὶ μὴ ταπεινὴν εἶναι. σα-  
 20 φεστάτη μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ἡ ἐκ τῶν κυρίων ὀνομάτων, ἀλλὰ  
 ταπεινὴ. παράδειγμα δὲ ἡ Κλεοφῶντος ποίησις καὶ ἡ

36. ἀλλ' ἄοιον Vettori: ἄλλα οἶνου codd. 1458 a 2. κεχρημένος  
 Hermann. 4. Πηλῆος καὶ τὸ Πηλείδου add. M. Schmidt. 6. ὄψ  
 Vettori: ὄης A<sup>c</sup> (h. e. ὄίς vel ὄΨίς). 11. καὶ Σ apogr. Maggi,  
 Arabs: om. A<sup>c</sup>. 12. ἐκ seclus. Ueberweg. 14. πλήθει apogr.:  
 πλήθῃ A<sup>c</sup>. 15. ante ταῦτα add. τῷ Σ Tyrwhitt. 17. post πέντε  
 add. apogr. τὸ πῶν τὸ νᾶπυ τὸ γᾶνυ τὸ δᾶρυ τὸ ἄστυ.

attributes; as if we were to call the shield, not 'the cup of Ares,' but 'the wineless cup.'

A newly-coined word is one which has never been 9 even in local use, but is invented by the poet himself. Some such words there appear to be: as ἐρνύγες, 'sprouters,' for κέρατα, 'horns,' and ἀρητήρ, 'supplicator,' for ἱερεὺς, 'priest.'

458 a A word is lengthened when its own vowel is exchanged 10 for a longer one, or when a syllable is inserted. A word is contracted when some part of it is removed. Instances of lengthening are,—πόλλος for πόλεως, Πηλῆος for Πηλέος, and Πηληιάδεω for Πηλείδου: of contraction,—κρί, δῶ, and δψ, as in μία γίνεται ἀμφοτέρων δψ.

An altered word is one in which part of the ordinary 11 form is left unchanged, and part is re-cast; as in δεξιτερὸν κατὰ μαζόν, δεξιτερόν is for δεξιόν.

[Nouns in themselves are either masculine, feminine, 12 or neuter. Masculine are such as end in ν, ρ, σ, or in some letter compounded with σ,—these being two, ψ and ξ. Feminine, such as end in vowels that are always long, as η and ω, and—of vowels that admit of lengthening—those in α. Thus the number of letters in which nouns masculine and feminine end is the same; for ψ and ξ are equivalent to endings in σ. No noun ends in a mute or a vowel short by nature. Three only end in ι, —μέλι, κόμμι, πέπερι: five end in υ. Neuter nouns end in these two latter vowels; also in ν and σ.]

XXII ✕ The perfection of style is to be clear without being mean. ✕ The clearest style is that which uses only current or proper words; at the same time it is mean:—witness the poetry of Cleophon and of Sthenelus. That diction,

Σθενέλου. σεμνή δὲ καὶ ἐξαλλάττουσα τὸ ἰδιωτικὸν ἢ  
 τοῖς ξενικοῖς κεχρημένη. ξενικὸν δὲ λέγω γλωτταν καὶ  
 μεταφορὰν καὶ ἐπέκτασιν καὶ πᾶν τὸ παρὰ τὸ κύριον.  
 25 ἀλλ' ἂν τις ἅμα ἅπαντα τοιαῦτα ποιήσῃ, ἢ αἰνιγμα ἔσται 2  
 ἢ βαρβαρισμός· ἂν μὲν οὖν ἐκ μεταφορῶν, αἰνιγμα, ἐὰν  
 δὲ ἐκ γλωττῶν, βαρβαρισμός· αἰνιγματός τε γὰρ ἰδέα  
 αὕτη ἐστί, τὸ λέγοντα ὑπάρχοντα ἀδύνατα συνάψαι.  
 κατὰ μὲν οὖν τὴν τῶν <ἄλλων> ὀνομάτων σύνθεσιν οὐχ  
 30 οἶον τε τοῦτο ποιῆσαι, κατὰ δὲ τὴν μεταφορὰν ἐνδέχεται,  
 οἶον “ἄνδρ' εἶδον πυρὶ χαλκὸν ἐπ' ἀνέρι κολλήσαντα,”  
 καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα. ἐκ τῶν γλωττῶν βαρβαρισμός. δεῖ 3  
 ἄρα κεκρᾶσθαι πῶς τούτοις· τὸ μὲν γὰρ μὴ ἰδιωτικὸν  
 ποιήσει μὴδὲ ταπεινόν, οἶον ἢ γλώττα καὶ ἢ μεταφορὰ  
 35 καὶ ὁ κόσμος καὶ τᾶλλα τὰ εἰρημένα εἶδη, τὸ δὲ κύριον  
 1458 b τὴν σαφῆνειαν. οὐκ ἐλάχιστον δὲ μέρος συμβάλλεται 4  
 εἰς τὸ σαφές τῆς λέξεως καὶ μὴ ἰδιωτικὸν αἰ ἐπεκτάσεις  
 καὶ ἀποκοπαὶ καὶ ἐξαλλαγαὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων· διὰ μὲν γὰρ  
 τὸ ἄλλως ἔχειν ἢ ὥς τὸ κύριον, παρὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς γιγνό-  
 5 μενον, τὸ μὴ ἰδιωτικὸν ποιήσει, διὰ δὲ τὸ κοινωνεῖν τοῦ  
 εἰωθότος τὸ σαφές ἔσται. ὥστε οὐκ ὀρθῶς ψέγουσιν οἱ 5  
 ἐπιτιμῶντες τῷ τοιούτῳ τρόπῳ τῆς διαλέκτου καὶ διακω-  
 μωδοῦντες τὸν ποιητὴν, οἶον Εὐκλείδης ὁ ἀρχαῖος, ὥς  
 ῥᾶδιον ποιεῖν, εἴ τις δώσει ἐκτείνειν ἐφ' ὅποσον βούλεται,  
 10 ἰαμβοποιήσας ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ λέξει. “Ἐπιχάρην εἶδον

25. τις ἅπαντα vel τις ἅμα ἅπαντα apogr.: ἂν ἅπαντα A°. ποσὴν  
 apogr.: ποιῆσαι A°. 29. ἄλλων conl. Margoliouth, collato Arabo  
 'reliqua nomina': κυρίων Heinsius. 32. ante vel post ἐκ . . .  
 βαρβαρισμός lacunam statuit Gomperz: ἐκ τ' <ἀμικτ>ων γλωττῶν Tucker.  
 33. κεκρᾶσθαι Maggi e cod. Lampridii, habuit iam Σ (cf. Arab. 'si mis-  
 centur haec'): κεκρίσθαι ceteri codd. 1458 b 1. συμβάλλεται A°:  
 συμβάλλονται apogr. 10. ἔρει χάριν A°: Ἐπιχάρην Bursian praesunte  
 Tyrwhitt ('Ἐπιχάρην'): ἐρεῖ χάριν Σ, ut videtur ('appellatum cum favore'  
 Arabe). εἶδον apogr.: ἰδῶν A°: ἰδῶν Gomperz.

on the other hand, is lofty and raised above the common-place which employs unusual words. By unusual, I mean strange (or rare) words, metaphorical, lengthened,—anything, in short, that differs from the normal idiom. Yet a style wholly composed of such words is either a riddle or a jargon; a riddle, if it consists of metaphors; a jargon, if it consists of strange (or rare) words. For the essence of a riddle is to express true facts under impossible combinations. Now this cannot be done by any arrangement of ordinary words, but by the use of metaphor it can. Such is the riddle:—‘A man I saw who on another man had glued the bronze by aid of fire,’ and others of the same kind. A diction that is made up of strange (or rare) terms is a jargon. A certain infusion, <sup>3</sup> therefore, of these elements is necessary to style; for the strange (or rare) word, the metaphorical, the ornamental, and the other kinds above mentioned, will raise it above the commonplace and mean, while the use of proper words will make it perspicuous. But nothing contributes <sup>4</sup> <sup>1458 b</sup> more to produce a clearness of diction that is remote from commonness than the lengthening, contraction, and alteration of words. For by deviating in exceptional cases from the normal idiom, the language will gain distinction; while, at the same time, the partial conformity with usage will give perspicuity. The critics, <sup>5</sup> therefore, are in error who censure these licenses of speech, and hold the author up to ridicule. Thus Eucleides, the elder, declared that it would be an easy matter to be a poet if you might lengthen syllables at will. He caricatured the practice in the very form of his diction, as in the verse:

Μαραθῶνάδε βαδίζοντα,” καὶ “οὐκ ἂν γ’ ἐράμενος τὸν  
 ἐκείνου ἐλλέβορον.” τὸ μὲν οὖν φαίνεσθαι πως χρώμενον 6  
 τούτῳ τῷ τρόπῳ γελοῖον, τὸ δὲ μέτρον κοινὸν ἀπάντων  
 ἐστὶ τῶν μερῶν· καὶ γὰρ μεταφοραῖς καὶ γλώτταις καὶ  
 15 τοῖς ἄλλοις εἵδεσι χρώμενος <ἄπρε> πῶς καὶ ἐπίτηδες ἐπὶ  
 τὰ γελοῖα τὸ αὐτὸ ἂν ἀπεργάσαιτο. τὸ δὲ ἀρμόττον 7  
 ὅσον διαφέρει ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπῶν θεωρεῖσθω ἐντιθεμένων τῶν  
 <κυρίων> ὀνομάτων εἰς τὸ μέτρον. καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γλώττης  
 δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μεταφορῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἰδεῶν  
 20 μετατιθεῖς ἂν τις τὰ κύρια ὀνόματα κατίδοι ὅτι ἀληθῆ  
 λέγομεν· οἶον τὸ αὐτὸ ποιήσαντος ἱαμβεῖον Αἰσχύλου  
 καὶ Εὐριπίδου, ἐν δὲ μόνον ὄνομα μεταθέντος, ἀντὶ  
 [κυρίου] εἰωθότος γλῶτταν, τὸ μὲν φαίνεται καλὸν τὸ δ’  
 εὐτελές. Αἰσχύλος μὲν γὰρ ἐν τῷ Φιλοκτήτῃ ἐποίησε  
 25 φαγέδαινα <δ’> ἥ μου σάρκας ἐσθίει ποδός,  
 ὃ δὲ ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐσθίει τὸ θοινᾶται μετέθηκεν. καὶ  
 νῦν δέ μ’ ἐὼν ὀλίγος τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς καὶ ἀεικής,<sup>1</sup>  
 εἴ τις λέγοι τὰ κύρια μετατιθεῖς  
 νῦν δέ μ’ ἐὼν μικρός τε καὶ ἀσθενικὸς καὶ ἀειδής·

<sup>1</sup> *Odyss.* ix. 515, νῦν δέ μ’ ἐὼν ὀλίγος τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς καὶ ἀεικής.

11. ἂν γ’ ἐράμενος *apogr.*: ἂν γεράμενος *A<sup>o</sup>*: γευσάμενος *Tyrwhitt*: πριά-  
 μενος *Gomperz*. 12. πως: ἀπρεπῶς *Twining*: πάντως *Hermann*:  
 ἀναισθήτως *Tucker*. 15. ἐπὶ τὰ γελοῖα *seclus. Gomperz*. 16.  
 ἀρμόττον *apogr.*: ἀρμόττοντος *A<sup>o</sup>*. 17. ἐπῶν: ἐπεκτάσεων *Tyrwhitt*.  
 18. κύριων *coni. Vahlen*. 21. Αἰσχύλῳ Εὐριπίδου *Essen*. 22.  
 μεταθέντος *Ald.*: μετατιθέντος *A<sup>o</sup>*. 23. κυρίου *vel εἰωθότος secludendum*  
*coni. Vahlen*: κυρίου <καὶ> εἰωθότος *Heinsius*. 25. δ’ (*vel τ’*) *add.*  
*Ritter*: φαγέδαινα’ *del Nauck*. 27. ἀεικής *Castelvetro* (var. *lec. Odyss.*  
*l. c.*), *Arabs* ‘ut non conveniat’: ἀειδής *codd.*: ἀεικής *Odyss. l. c.*

Ἐπιχάρην εἶδον Μαραθῶνάδε βαδίζοντα,

or,

οὐκ ἂν γ' ἐράμενος τὸν ἐκείνου ἐλλέβορον.

To employ such license at all obtrusively is, no doubt, 6 grotesque; but in any mode of poetic diction there must be moderation. Even metaphors, strange (or rare) words, or any similar forms of speech, would produce the like effect if used without propriety, and with the express purpose of being ludicrous. How great a differ- 7 ence is made by the appropriate use of lengthening, may be seen in Epic poetry by the insertion of ordinary forms in the verse. So, again, if we take a strange (or rare) word, a metaphor, or any similar mode of expression, and replace it by the current or proper term, the truth of our observation will be manifest. For example Aeschylus and Euripides each composed the same iambic line. But the alteration of a single word by Euripides, who employed the rarer term instead of the ordinary one, makes one verse appear beautiful and the other trivial. Aeschylus in his *Philoctetes* says:

φαγέδαινα <δ'> ἥ μου σάρκας ἐσθίει ποδός.

Euripides substitutes *θοινᾷται* 'feasts on' for *ἐσθίει* 'feeds on.' Again, in the line,

νῦν δέ μ' ἐὼν ὀλίγος τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς καὶ ἀεικής,

the difference will be felt if we substitute the common words,

νῦν δέ μ' ἐὼν μικρός τε καὶ ἀσθενικὸς καὶ ἀειδής.



30 καὶ

δίφρον [τ'] ἀεικέλιον καταθείς ὀλίγην τε τράπεζαν,<sup>1</sup>

δίφρον μοχθηρὸν καταθείς μικράν τε τράπεζαν.

καὶ τὸ “ἡόνες βοόωσιν”<sup>2</sup> ἡόνες κράζουσιν. ἔτι δὲ 8

Ἀριφράδης τοὺς τραγῳδοὺς ἐκωμῶδει, ὅτι ἂ οὐδεὶς ἂν

35 εἴποι ἐν τῇ διαλέκτῳ τούτοις χρώνται, οἶον τὸ δωμάτων

ἄπο ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀπὸ δωμάτων, καὶ τὸ σέθεν καὶ τὸ ἐγὼ

1458 a δέ νιν, καὶ τὸ Ἀχιλλέως πέρι ἀλλὰ μὴ περὶ Ἀχιλλέως,

καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τοιαῦτα. διὰ γὰρ τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἐν τοῖς

κυρίοις ποιεῖ τὸ μὴ ἰδιωτικὸν ἐν τῇ λέξει ἅπαντα τὰ

τοιαῦτα· ἐκεῖνος δὲ τοῦτο ἡγνύει. ἔστιν δὲ μέγα μὲν 9

5 τὸ ἐκάστῳ τῶν εἰρημένων πρεπόντως χρῆσθαι, καὶ

διπλοῖς ὀνόμασι καὶ γλώτταις, πολὺ δὲ μέγιστον τὸ

μεταφορικὸν εἶναι. μόνον γὰρ τοῦτο οὔτε παρ’ ἄλλου

ἔστι λαβεῖν εὐφύας τε σημείον ἔστι· τὸ γὰρ εὖ μετα-

φέρειν τὸ τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν ἔστιν. τῶν δ’ ὀνομάτων τὰ 10

10 μὲν διπλᾷ μάλιστα ἀρμόττει τοῖς διθυράμβοις, αἱ δὲ

γλῶτται τοῖς ἥρωικοῖς, αἱ δὲ μεταφοραὶ τοῖς ἱαμβείοις.

καὶ ἐν μὲν τοῖς ἥρωικοῖς ἅπαντα χρήσιμα τὰ εἰρημένα,

ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἱαμβείοις διὰ τὸ ὅτι μάλιστα λέξιν μιμείσθαι

ταῦτα ἀρμόττει τῶν ὀνομάτων ὅσοις κἂν ἐν [ὅσοις] λόγοις

15 τις χρῆσαιτο· ἔστι δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα τὸ κύριον καὶ μετα-

φορὰ καὶ κόσμος.

περὶ μὲν οὖν τραγῳδίας καὶ τῆς ἐν τῷ πράττειν μιμή-

σεως ἔστω ἡμῖν ἱκανὰ τὰ εἰρημένα.

<sup>1</sup> *Odys.* xx. 259, δίφρον ἀεικέλιον καταθείς ὀλίγην τε τράπεζαν.

<sup>2</sup> *Iliad* xvii. 265.

31. τ' ἀεικέλιον codd.: τ' αἰκέλιον Vahlen: τε seclus. Susemihl ed. 1.

35. εἴποι apogr.: εἴπη A°. 1459 a 5. τὸ apogr.: τῷ A°. 14.

κἂν Harles: καὶ codd. ὅσοις del. Ald.: <τοῖς> λόγοις Gomperz:

ὁδοῖς Σ, ut videtur (Ellis), cf. Arab. 'quot usurpant homines in via.'

Or, if for the line,

δίφρον [τ'] ἀεικέλιον καταθείς ὀλίγην τε τράπεζαν,

we read,

δίφρον μοχθηρὸν καταθείς μικράν τε τράπεζαν.

Or, for *ἡόνες βοόωσιν, ἡόνες κράζουσιν*.

Again, Ariphrades ridiculed the tragedians for using 8 phrases which no one would employ in ordinary speech: for example, *δωμάτων ἄπο* instead of *ἀπὸ δωμάτων*, *σέθεν, ἐγὼ δέ νιν*, *Ἀχιλλέως πέρι* instead of *περὶ Ἀχιλλέως*, and the like. It is precisely because such phrases are not part of the current idiom that they give distinction to the style. This, however, he failed to see.

It is a great matter to observe propriety in these 9 several modes of expression—compound words, strange (or rare) words, and so forth. ~~But~~ But the greatest thing by far is to have a command of metaphor. This alone cannot be imparted by another; it is the mark of genius, —for to make good metaphors implies an eye for resemblances.

Of the various kinds of words, the compound are 10 best adapted to dithyrambs, rare words to heroic poetry, metaphors to iambic. In heroic poetry, indeed, all these varieties are serviceable. But in iambic verse, which reproduces, as far as may be, familiar speech, the most appropriate words are those which are found even in prose. These are,—the current or proper, the metaphorical, the ornamental.

Concerning Tragedy and imitation by means of action, this may suffice.

XXIII περὶ δὲ τῆς διηγηματικῆς καὶ ἐν<ι> μέτρῳ μιμη-  
 20 τικῆς, ὅτι δεῖ τοὺς μύθους καθάπερ ἐν ταῖς τραγωδίαις  
 συνεστάναι δραματικούς καὶ περὶ μίαν πρᾶξιν ὅλην καὶ  
 τελείαν, ἔχουσιν ἀρχὴν καὶ μέσα καὶ τέλος, ἵν' ὥσπερ  
 ζῶον ἐν ὅλῳ ποιῇ τὴν οἰκίαν ἡδονήν, δῆλον· καὶ μὴ  
 ὁμοίως ἱστορίαις τὰς συνθέσεις εἶναι, ἐν αἷς ἀνάγκη οὐχὶ  
 25 μᾶς πράξεως ποιεῖσθαι δήλωσιν ἀλλ' ἐνὸς χρόνου, ὅσα  
 ἐν τούτῳ συνέβη περὶ ἓνα ἢ πλείους, ὧν ἕκαστον ὡς  
 ἔτυχεν ἔχει πρὸς ἄλληλα. ὥσπερ γὰρ κατὰ τοὺς αὐτοὺς 2  
 χρόνους ἢ τ' ἐν Σαλαμῖνι ἐγένετο ναυμαχία καὶ ἡ ἐν  
 Σικελίᾳ Καρχηδονίων μάχη οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ συντεί-  
 30 νουσαι τέλος, οὕτω καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐφεξῆς χρόνοις ἐνίοτε  
 γίνεται θάτερον μετὰ θάτερον, ἐξ ὧν ἐν οὐδὲν γίνεται  
 τέλος. σχεδὸν δὲ οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν ποιητῶν τοῦτο δρῶσι.  
 διό, ὥσπερ εἵπομεν ἤδη, καὶ ταύτῃ θεσπέσιος ἂν φανείη 3  
 Ὅμηρος παρὰ τοὺς ἄλλους, τῷ μὴδὲ τὸν πόλεμον καίπερ  
 35 ἔχοντα ἀρχὴν καὶ τέλος ἐπιχειρήσαι ποιεῖν ὅλον· λίαν  
 γὰρ ἂν μέγας καὶ οὐκ εὐσύνοπτος ἔμελλεν ἔσεσθαι, ἡ  
 τῷ μεγέθει μετριάζοντα καταπεπλεγμένον τῇ ποικιλίᾳ.  
 νῦν δ' ἐν μέρος ἀπολαβῶν ἐπεισοδίοις κέχρηται αὐτῶν  
 πολλοῖς, οἷον νεῶν καταλόγῳ καὶ ἄλλοις ἐπεισοδίοις, οἷς  
 40 διαλαμβάνει τὴν ποιήσιν. οἱ δ' ἄλλοι περὶ ἓνα ποιούσι  
 1459 b καὶ περὶ ἓνα χρόνον καὶ μίαν πρᾶξιν πολυμερῆ, οἷον ὁ

19. ἐνὶ (vel ἐν ἐνὶ) μέτρῳ conieci (cf. 1449 b 11, 1459 b 36): ἐν ἑξαμέτρῳ Heinsius: ἐν μέτρῳ codd. 21. συνεστάναι coni. Vahlen: συνιστάναι A<sup>o</sup>.

24. ἱστορίαις τὰς συνθέσεις Dacier, confirmare videtur Arabs: ἱστορίας τὰς συνθέσεις codd. 28. ναυμαχία apogr.: ναύμαχος A<sup>o</sup>.

31. μετὰ θάτερον Castelvetro, Hermann: μετὰ θατέρου codd. 34. τῷ apogr.: τὸ A<sup>o</sup>. 36. μέγα (rec. corr. μέγας) . . . εὐσύνοπτος . . . μετριάζοντα A<sup>o</sup>: μέγα . . . εὐσύνοπτον . . . μετρίαζον posito commate post ἔσεσθαι Bursian.

38. αὐτῶν seclus. Christ: αὐτοῦ Heinsius. 39. οἷς apogr.: οἷς pr. A<sup>o</sup> et ceteri codd.

XIII    As to that poetic imitation which is narrative in form and employs a single metre, the plot manifestly ought, as in a tragedy, to be constructed on dramatic principles. It should have for its subject a single action, whole and complete, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. It will thus resemble a single and coherent picture of a living being, and produce the pleasure proper to it. It will differ in structure from historical compositions, which of necessity present not a single action, but a single period, and all that happened within that period to one person or to many, little connected together as the events may be. For as the sea-fight at 2 Salamis and the battle with the Carthaginians in Sicily took place at the same time, but did not tend to one result, so in the sequence of events, one thing sometimes follows another, and yet the two may not work up to any common end. Such is the practice, we may say, of most poets. Here again, then, as has been already 3 observed, the transcendent excellence of Homer is manifest. He never attempts to make the whole war of Troy the subject of his poem, though that war had a beginning and an end. It would have been too vast a theme, and not easily embraced in a single view. If, again, he had kept it within moderate limits, it must have been over-complicated by the variety of the incidents. As it is, he detaches a single portion, and admits as episodes many events from the general story of the war—such as the Catalogue of the ships and others—thus diversifying the poem. All other poets 1450 take a single hero, a single period, or an action single indeed, but with a multiplicity of parts. Thus did the

τὰ Κύπρια ποιήσας καὶ τὴν μικρὰν Ἰλιάδα. τοιγαροῦν 4  
 ἐκ μὲν Ἰλιάδος καὶ Ὀδυσσεΐας μία τραγῳδία ποιεῖται  
 ἑκατέρας ἢ δύο μόναι, ἐκ δὲ Κυπρίων πολλαὶ καὶ τῆς  
 5 μικρᾶς Ἰλιάδος [πλέον] ὀκτώ, οἷον ὅπλων κρίσις,  
 Φιλοκτήτης, Νεοπτόλεμος, Εὐρύπυλος, Πτωχία, Λά-  
 καιναι, Ἰλίου πέρσις καὶ ἀπόπλους [καὶ Σίνων καὶ  
 Τρωάδες].

XXIV ἔτι δὲ [ἔτι δὲ] τὰ εἶδη ταῦτα δεῖ ἔχειν τὴν ἐποποιίαν  
 10 τῇ τραγῳδίᾳ, ἣ γὰρ ἀπλὴν ἢ πεπλεγμένην ἢ ἠθικὴν ἢ  
 παθητικὴν· καὶ τὰ μέρη ἔξω μελοποιίας καὶ ὄψεως  
 ταῦτά· καὶ γὰρ περιπετειῶν δεῖ καὶ ἀναγνωρίσεων καὶ  
 παθημάτων· ἔτι τὰς διανοίας καὶ τὴν λέξιν ἔχειν καλῶς.  
 οἷς ἅπασιν Ὀμηρὸς κέχρηται καὶ πρῶτος καὶ ἱκανῶς. 2  
 15 καὶ γὰρ καὶ τῶν ποιημάτων ἑκάτερον συνέστηκεν ἢ μὲν  
 Ἰλιάς ἀπλοῦν καὶ παθητικόν, ἢ δὲ Ὀδύσσεια πεπλεγ-  
 μένον (ἀναγνώρισις γὰρ διόλου) καὶ ἠθική. πρὸς δὲ  
 τούτοις λέξει καὶ διανοίᾳ πάντα ὑπερβέβληκεν. δια- 3  
 φέρει δὲ κατὰ τε τῆς συστάσεως τὸ μῆκος ἢ ἐποποιία  
 20 καὶ τὸ μέτρον. τοῦ μὲν οὖν μήκους ὅρος ἱκανὸς ὁ  
 εἰρημένος· δύνασθαι γὰρ δεῖ συνορᾶσθαι τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ  
 τὸ τέλος. εἴη δ' ἂν τοῦτο, εἰ τῶν μὲν ἀρχαίων ἐλάτ-  
 τους αἱ συστάσεις εἶεν, πρὸς δὲ τὸ πλῆθος τραγῳδιῶν  
 τῶν εἰς μίαν ἀκρόασιν τιθεμένων παρήκοιεν. ἔχει δὲ 4  
 25 πρὸς τὸ ἐπεκτείνεσθαι τὸ μέγεθος πολὺ τι ἢ ἐποποιία  
 ἴδιον διὰ τὸ ἐν μὲν τῇ τραγῳδίᾳ μὴ ἐνδέχεσθαι ἅμα

1459 b 2. Κύπρια Tyrwhitt: κυπρικὰ Δ°. 5. πλέον et καὶ Σίνων καὶ  
 Τρωάδες seclus. Hermann. 9. δεῖ apogr.: δεῖ Δ°. 10. ἠθικὴν om.  
 Arabs. 12. καὶ ἠθῶν post ἀναγνωρίσεων add. Susemihl. 14.  
 ἱκανῶς; apogr.: ἱκανὸς Δ°. 17. ἀναγνώρισις Christ. ἠθικὸν rec.  
 sup. sor. Δ°. δὲ apogr.: γὰρ Δ°. 18. πάντας Ald. 24.  
 Fort. καθιεμένων Richards.

author of the Cypria and of the Little Iliad. For this 4 reason the Iliad and the Odyssey each furnish the subject of one tragedy, or, at most, of two; while the Cypria supplies materials for many, and the Little Iliad eight—the Award of the Arms, the Philoctetes, the Neoptolemus, Eurypylos, the Mendicant Odysseus, the Laconian Women, the Fall of Ilium, the Departure of the Fleet.

IV ~~Again, Epic poetry must have as many kinds as~~ Tragedy: it must be simple, or complex, or 'ethical,' or 'pathetic.' The parts also, with the exception of song and scenery, are the same; for it requires Reversals, Recognitions, and Tragic Incidents. Moreover, the thoughts and the diction must be artistic. In all 2 these respects Homer is our earliest and sufficient model. Indeed each of his poems has a twofold character. The Iliad is at once simple and 'pathetic,' and the Odyssey complex (for Recognition scenes run through it), and at the same time 'ethical.' Moreover, in diction and thought he is supreme.

Epic poetry differs from Tragedy in the scale on 3 which it is constructed, and in its metre. As regards scale or length, we have already laid down an adequate limit:—the beginning and the end must be capable of being brought within a single view. This condition will be satisfied by poems on a smaller scale than the old epics, and answering in length to the group of tragedies presented at a single sitting.

f Epic poetry has, however, a great—a special—4 capacity for enlarging its dimensions, and we can see the reason. In Tragedy we cannot imitate several actions

πραττόμενα πολλά μέρη μινεῖσθαι ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς  
 σκηπῆς καὶ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν μέρος μόνον· ἐν δὲ τῇ  
 ἐποποιίᾳ διὰ τὸ διήγησιν εἶναι ἔστι πολλά μέρη ἅμα  
 30 ποιεῖν περαινόμενα, ὅφ' ὧν οἰκείων ὄντων αὐξεται ὁ  
 τοῦ ποιήματος ὄγκος. ὥστε τοῦτ' ἔχει τὸ ἀγαθὸν εἰς  
 μεγαλοπρέπειαν καὶ τὸ μεταβάλλειν τὸν ἀκούοντα καὶ  
 ἐπεισοδιοῦν ἀνομοίοις ἐπεισοδίοις· τὸ γὰρ ὁμοιον ταχὺ  
 πληροῦν ἐκπίπτειν ποιεῖ τὰς τραγωδίας. τὸ δὲ μέτρον 5  
 35 τὸ ἥρωικόν ἀπὸ τῆς πείρας ἤρμοκεν. εἰ γάρ τις ἐν  
 ἄλλῃ τινὶ μέτρῳ διηγηματικὴν μίμησιν ποιοῖτο ἢ ἐν  
 πολλοῖς, ἀπρεπὲς ἂν φαίνοιτο· τὸ γὰρ ἥρωικόν στασι-  
 μώτατον καὶ ὀγκωδέστατον τῶν μέτρων ἐστίν (διὸ καὶ  
 γλώττας καὶ μεταφορὰς δέχεται μάλιστα· περιττὴ γὰρ  
 40 καὶ <ταύτη> ἡ διηγηματικὴ μίμησις τῶν ἄλλων). τὸ  
 1460 α δὲ ἱαμβεῖον καὶ τετράμετρον κινητικά, τὸ μὲν ὀρχηστικόν  
 τὸ δὲ πρακτικόν. ἔτι δὲ ἀτοπώτερον, εἰ μινύοι τις 6  
 αὐτά, ὥσπερ Χαιρήμων. διὸ οὐδεὶς μακρὰν σύστασιν  
 ἐν ἄλλῃ πεποίηκεν ἢ τῷ ἡρώϊ, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ εἶπομεν  
 5 αὐτὴ ἡ φύσις διδάσκει τὸ ἀρμόττον [αὐτῇ] [δι-]  
 αἰρεῖσθαι. Ὅμηρος δὲ ἄλλα τε πολλὰ ἄξιος ἐπαινεί-7  
 σθαι καὶ δὴ καὶ ὅτι μόνος τῶν ποιητῶν οὐκ ἄγνοεῖ δ  
 δεῖ ποιεῖν αὐτόν. αὐτὸν γὰρ δεῖ τὸν ποιητὴν  
 ἐλάχιστα λέγειν· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶ κατὰ ταῦτα μιμητής.  
 10 οἱ μὲν οὖν ἄλλοι αὐτοὶ μὲν δι' ὅλου ἀγωνίζονται,

40. καὶ codd.: καὶ ταύτη Twining: κἀν ταύταις Bywater. μίμησις  
 apogr.: κίνησις A°. 1460 a l. κινητικά A°: κινητικά Ald., Bekker:  
 κινητικά καὶ Vahlen: κινητικά, ei Gomperz. 2. μινύοι Ald.: μινύει  
 apogr.: μινύνη A° (fuit μή, et η extremum in litura corr.): μή γνολή  
 Σ, cf. Arab. 'si quis nesciret' (Margoliouth). 5. αὐτῇ apogr.: αὐτή,  
 A°: seclus. Gomperz. αἰρεῖσθαι Bonitz, confirmare videtur Arabs  
 (Margoliouth): διαίρεσθαι A°.

carried on at one and the same time; we must confine ourselves to the action on the stage and the part taken by the players. But in Epic poetry, owing to the narrative form, many events simultaneously transacted can be presented; and these, if relevant to the subject, add mass and dignity to the poem. The Epic has here an advantage, and one that conduces to grandeur of effect, also diverting the mind of the hearer and relieving the story with varying episodes. For sameness of incident soon produces satiety, and makes tragedies fail on the stage.

As for the metre, the heroic measure has proved its fitness by the test of experience. If a narrative poem in any other metre or in many metres were now composed, it would be found incongruous. For of all measures the heroic is the stateliest and the most massive; and hence it most readily admits rare words and metaphors, which is another point in which the narrative form of imitation stands alone. On the other <sup>1480</sup> hand, the iambic and the trochaic tetrameter are stirring measures, the latter being akin to dancing, the former expressive of action. Still more absurd would it be to mix together different metres, as was done by Chaeremon. Hence no one has ever composed a poem on a great scale in any other than heroic verse. Nature herself, as we have said, teaches the choice of the proper measure.

Homer, admirable in all respects, has the special merit of being the only poet who rightly appreciates the part he should take himself. The poet should speak as little as possible in his own person, for it is not this that makes him an imitator. Other poets appear themselves upon



μιμούνται δὲ ὀλίγα καὶ ὀλιγάκις· ὁ δὲ ὀλίγα φροίμα-  
 σάμενος εὐθὺς εἰσάγει ἄνδρα ἢ γυναῖκα ἢ ἄλλο τι  
 [ἦθος] καὶ οὐδέν' ἀήθη ἀλλ' ἔχοντα ἦθη. δεῖ μὲν 8  
 οὖν ἐν ταῖς τραγῳδίαις ποιεῖν τὸ θαυμαστόν, μᾶλλον  
 15 δ' ἐνδέχεται ἐν τῇ ἐποποιίᾳ τὸ ἄλογον, δι' ὃ συμ-  
 βαίνει μάλιστα τὸ θαυμαστόν, διὰ τὸ μὴ ὄρᾶν εἰς τὸν  
 πράττοντα· ἐπεὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν Ἑκτορος δῖωξιν ἐπὶ  
 σκηνῆς ὄντα γελοῖα ἂν φανείη, οἱ μὲν ἐστῶτες καὶ οὐ  
 διώκοντες, ὁ δὲ ἀνανεύων, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἔπεσιν λανθάνει.  
 20 τὸ δὲ θαυμαστόν ἡδύ· σημεῖον δέ· πάντες γὰρ προστι-  
 θέντες ἀπαγγέλλουσιν ὡς χαριζόμενοι. δεδίδαχεν δὲ 9  
 μάλιστα Ὅμηρος καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ψευδῇ λέγειν ὡς δεῖ.  
 ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο παραλογισμός. οἴονται γὰρ ἄνθρωποι,  
 ὅταν τουδὶ ὄντος τοδὶ ἦ ἢ γινομένου γίνηται, εἰ τὸ  
 25 ὕστερον ἔστιν, καὶ τὸ πρότερον εἶναι ἢ γίνεσθαι· τοῦτο  
 δέ ἐστι ψεῦδος. διὸ δῆ, ἂν τὸ πρῶτον ψεῦδος, ἀλλ'  
 οὐδέ, τούτου ὄντος, ἀνάγκη <κἀκεῖνο> εἶναι ἢ γενέσθαι  
 [ἢ] προσθεῖναι· διὰ γὰρ τὸ τοῦτο εἰδέναι ἀληθὲς ὄν,  
 παραλογίζεται ἡμῶν ἢ ψυχῇ καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ὡς ὄν. ✓  
 30 παράδειγμα δὲ τούτου ἐκ τῶν Νίπτρων. προαιρεῖσθαι 10  
 τε δεῖ ἀδύνατα εἰκότα μᾶλλον ἢ δυνατὰ ἀπίθανα· τοὺς  
 τε λόγους μὴ συνίστασθαι ἐκ μερῶν ἀλόγων, ἀλλὰ

13. ἦθος om. Reiz, habuit iam Σ: εἶδος Bursian. οὐδέν' ἀήθη apogr.:  
 οὐδένα ἦθη A<sup>c</sup>. ἔχοντα ἦθος coni. Christ. 14. Post οὖν add. <καὶ ἐν  
 τοῖς ἔπεσιν καὶ> Christ, fort. recte: καὶ ταῖς Gomperz. 15. ἄλογον  
 Vettori: ἀνάλογον codd., Σ. δι' ὃ Vettori: διὸ codd. 17. ἐπεὶ τὰ  
 apogr.: ἔπειτα τὰ A<sup>c</sup>, Σ. 24. ἦ ἢ apogr.: ἦν A<sup>c</sup>, rec. corr. ἦ.  
 25. γενέσθαι coni. Christ. 26. δῆ: δεῖ Bonitz, Christ. ἄλλου δὲ  
 A<sup>c</sup>: ἀλλ' οὐδὲ rec. corr.: ἄλλο δὲ cod. Robortelli, Bonitz: ἄλλο δ' ὃ  
 Vahlen: ἄλλο, ὃ Christ: κἀκεῖνο add. Tucker. Cum verbis ἀλλ'  
 οὐδὲ . . . ἀνάγκη . . . προσθεῖναι contulerim Rhet. i. 2. 13, 1357 a 17,  
 ἐὰν γὰρ ἦ τι τούτων γνώριμον, οὐδὲ δεῖ λέγειν· αὐτὸς γὰρ τοῦτο προστί-  
 θησιν ὁ ἀκροατής, et 18, τὸ δ' ὅτι στεφανίτης τὰ Ὀλύμπια, οὐδὲ δεῖ προσθεῖναι.  
 28. ἢ seclus. Bonitz, Christ: ἢ Vahlen. 30. τούτου codex Robortelli:  
 τοῦτο A<sup>c</sup>: τούτων apogr.

the scene throughout, and imitate but little and rarely. Homer, after a few prefatory words, at once brings in a man, or woman, or other personage; none of them wanting in characteristic qualities, but each with a character of his own.

( The element of the wonderful is admitted in Tragedy. 8  
 The irrational, on which the wonderful depends for its chief effects, has wider scope in Epic poetry, because there the person acting is not seen. Thus, the pursuit of Hector would be ludicrous if placed upon the stage—the Greeks standing still and not joining in the pursuit, and Achilles waving them back. But in the Epic poem the absurdity passes unnoticed. Now the wonderful is pleasing: as may be inferred from the fact that, in telling a story, every one adds something startling of his own, knowing that his hearers like it. It is Homer who 9 has chiefly taught other poets the art of telling lies skilfully. The secret of it lies in a fallacy. For, assuming that if one thing is or becomes, a second is or becomes, men imagine that, if the second is, the first likewise is or becomes. But this is a false inference. Hence, where the first thing is untrue, it is quite unnecessary, provided the second be true, to add that the first is or has become. For the mind, knowing the second to be true, falsely infers the truth of the first. There is an example of this in the Bath Scene of the Odyssey.

Accordingly, the poet should prefer probable im- 10  
possibilities to improbable possibilities. The tragic plot must not be composed of irrational parts. Everything

μάλιστα μὲν μηδὲν ἔχειν ἄλογον, εἰ δὲ μή, ἔξω τοῦ  
 μυθεύματος, ὥσπερ Οἰδίπους τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι πῶς ὁ Λάιος  
 35 ἀπέθανεν, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἐν τῷ δράματι, ὥσπερ ἐν Ἡλέκτρᾳ  
 οἱ τὰ Πύθια ἀπαγγέλλοντες, ἡ ἐν Μυσοῖς ὁ ἄφωνος  
 ἐκ Τεγέας εἰς τὴν Μυσίαν ἦκων. ὥστε τὸ λέγειν ὅτι  
 ἀνήρητο ἂν ὁ μῦθος γελοῖον· ἐξ ἀρχῆς γὰρ οὐ δεῖ  
 συνίστασθαι τοιούτους· ἂν δὲ θῇ καὶ φαίνεται εὐλογω-  
 40 τέως, ἐνδέχασθαι καὶ ἄτοπον <ὄν>. ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰ ἐν  
 Ὀδυσσεΐᾳ ἄλογα τὰ περὶ τὴν ἔκθεσιν ὥς οὐκ ἂν ἦν  
 1460 b ἀνεκτὰ δῆλον ἂν γένοιτο, εἰ αὐτὰ φαῦλος ποιητῆς  
 ποιήσκει· νῦν δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀγαθοῖς ὁ ποιητῆς ἀφανίζει  
 ἡδύνων τὸ ἄτοπον. τῇ δὲ λέξει δεῖ διαπονεῖν ἐν τοῖς 11  
 ἀργοῖς μέρεσιν καὶ μήτε ἠθικοῖς μήτε διανοητικοῖς·  
 5 ἀποκρύπτει γὰρ πάλιν ἡ λῖαν λαμπρὰ λέξις τὰ τε  
 ἦθη καὶ τὰς διανοίας.

XXV περὶ δὲ προβλημάτων καὶ λύσεων, ἐκ πόσων τε καὶ  
 ποίων εἰδῶν ἐστίν, ὧδ' ἂν θεωροῦσιν γένοιτ' ἂν φανερόν.  
 ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἐστὶ μιμητῆς ὁ ποιητῆς ὥσπερ ἀνὲν ζωγράφος  
 10 ἢ τις ἄλλος εἰκονοποιός, ἀνάγκη μιμεῖσθαι τριῶν ὄντων  
 τὸν ἀριθμὸν ἐν τι αἰεὶ, ἡ γὰρ οἷα ἦν ἡ ἔστιν, ἡ οἷά  
 φασιν καὶ δοκεῖ, ἡ οἷα εἶναι δεῖ. ταῦτα δ' ἐξαγγέλλ- 2  
 λεται λέξει <ἡ κυρίους ὀνόμασιν> ἡ καὶ γλώτταις καὶ  
 μεταφοραῖς· καὶ πολλὰ πάθη τῆς λέξεως ἐστί, δίδομεν

34. <ὁ> Οἰδίπους Bywater. 40. ἀποδέχασθαι apogr. ὄν addidi.  
 1460 b 2. ποιήσκει Heinsius: ποιήσει codd.: ἐποίησεν Spengel. 5. τε  
 apogr.: δὲ A°. 8. ποίων εἰδῶν apogr.: ποίων ἂν εἰδῶν A°. 11. τὸν  
 ἀριθμὸν vel τῷ ἀριθμῷ apogr.: τῶν ἀριθμῶν A°. 12. ἡ οἷα apogr.:  
 οἷα A°. 13. <ἡ κυρίους ὀνόμασιν> conl. Vahlen: <ἡ κυρία>  
 Gomperz sec. Vahlen. 14. καὶ δσ' ἄλλα πάθη conl. Vahlen.

irrational should, if possible, be excluded; or, at all events, it should lie outside the action of the play (as, in the Oedipus, the hero's ignorance as to the manner of Laius' death); not within the drama,—as in the Electra, the messenger's account of the Pythian games; or, as in the Mysians, the man who comes from Tegea to Mysia without speaking. The plea that otherwise the plot would have been ruined, is ridiculous. Such a plot should not in the first instance be constructed. But once it has been framed and an air of likelihood imparted to it, the absurdity itself should be tolerated. Take the irrational incidents in the Odyssey, where Odysseus is left upon the shore of Ithaca. How intolerable even these might have been would be apparent <sup>1480</sup> if an inferior poet were to treat the subject. As it is, the absurdity is veiled by the poetic charm with which the poet invests it.

( The diction should be elaborated in the pauses of 11 the action, where there is no expression of character or thought. For, conversely, character and thought are merely obscured by a diction that is over brilliant.

XXV With respect to critical difficulties and their solutions, the number and nature of the sources from which they may be drawn may be thus exhibited.

The poet being an imitator, like a painter or any other artist, must of necessity imitate one of three objects,—things as they were or are, things as they are said or thought to be, or things as they ought to be. The vehicle of expression is language,—either current 2 terms or, it may be, rare words or metaphors. There are also many modifications of language, which we

- 15 γὰρ ταῦτα τοῖς ποιηταῖς. πρὸς δὲ τοῦτοις οὐχ ἡ αὐτὴ 3  
 ὀρθότης ἐστὶν τῆς πολιτικῆς καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς οὐδὲ  
 ἄλλης τέχνης καὶ ποιητικῆς. αὐτῆς δὲ τῆς ποιητικῆς  
 διττὴ ἁμαρτία, ἡ μὲν γὰρ καθ' αὐτήν, ἡ δὲ κατὰ συμβε-  
 βηκός. εἰ μὲν γὰρ <τι> προείλετο μιμήσασθαι <μὴ 4  
 20 ὀρθῶς δὲ ἐμιμήσατο δι'> ἀδυναμίαν, αὐτῆς ἡ ἁμαρτία·  
 εἰ δὲ <διὰ> τὸ προελέσθαι μὴ ὀρθῶς, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἵππον  
 <ἄμ'> ἄμφω τὰ δεξιὰ προβεβληκότα ἢ τὸ καθ' ἐκάστην  
 τέχνην ἁμάρτημα οἶον τὸ κατ' ἱατρικὴν ἢ ἄλλην τέχνην  
 [ἢ ἀδύνατα πεποίηται] ὅποιανοῦν, οὐ καθ' ἑαυτήν. ὥστε  
 25 δεῖ τὰ ἐπιτιμήματα ἐν τοῖς προβλήμασιν ἐκ τούτων  
 ἐπισκοποῦντα λύειν. πρῶτον μὲν εἰ πρὸς αὐτὴν τὴν 5  
 τέχνην ἀδύνατα πεποίηται, ἡμάρτηται, ἀλλ' ὀρθῶς ἔχει,  
 εἰ τυγχάνει τοῦ τέλους τοῦ αὐτῆς (τὸ γὰρ τέλος εἴρηται),  
 εἰ οὕτως ἐκπληκτικώτερον ἢ αὐτὸ ἢ ἄλλο ποιεῖ μέρος.  
 30 παράδειγμα ἡ τοῦ Ἑκτορος δῖωξις. εἰ μέντοι τὸ τέλος  
 ἢ μᾶλλον ἢ <μὴ> ἤττον ἐνεδέχετο ὑπάρχειν καὶ κατὰ  
 τὴν περὶ τούτων τέχνην, [ἡμαρτῆσθαι] οὐκ ὀρθῶς· δεῖ  
 γὰρ εἰ ἐνδέχεται ὅλως μηδαμῇ ἡμαρτῆσθαι. ἔτι ποτέρων  
 ἐστὶ τὸ ἁμάρτημα, τῶν κατὰ τὴν τέχνην ἢ κατ' ἄλλο  
 35 συμβεβηκός; ἔλαττον γὰρ εἰ μὴ ᾔδει ὅτι ἔλαφος θήλεια  
 κέρατα οὐκ ἔχει ἢ εἰ ἀμμήτως ἔγραψεν. πρὸς δὲ 6  
 τοῦτοις ἐὰν ἐπιτιμᾶται ὅτι οὐκ ἀληθῆ, ἀλλ' ἴσως <ὥς>

19. τι addidi. μὴ ὀρθῶς . . . δι' addidi: post μιμήσασθαι coni.  
 Vahlen ὀρθῶς, ἡμαρτε δ' ἐν τῷ μιμήσασθαι δι'. 21. εἰ apogr.: ἢ A°.   
 διὰ add. Ueberweg. 22. ἄμ' add. Vahlen. 24. ἢ ἀδύνατα  
 πεποίηται seclus. Düntzer: τέχνην ὅποιανοῦν [ἢ] ἀδύνατα πεποίηται Christ.  
 26. εἰ: τὰ A°, εἰ sup. scr. τὰ πρὸς αὐτὴν τὴν τέχνην· plerique edd.  
 27. εἰ add. Vahlen ante ἀδύνατα. 28. εἴρηται: εὐρηται Heinsius:  
 τηρεῖται M. Schmidt. 31. ἢ μὴ ἤττον Ueberweg, ἤττον A°: ἢ ἤττον  
 rec. A°, Vahlen. 32. ἡμαρτῆσθαι seclus. Bywater, Ussing: ἡμάρτηται  
 Ald., Bekker: τὴν περὶ τούτων τέχνην <μὴ> ἡμαρτῆσθαι, Tucker. 37.  
 ὥς coni. Vahlen.



concede to the poets. Add to this, that the standard of 3 correctness is not the same in poetry and politics, any more than in poetry and any other art. Within the art of poetry itself there are two kinds of faults,—those which touch its essence, and those which are accidental. If a poet has proposed to himself to imitate something, 4 <but has imitated it incorrectly> through want of capacity, the error is inherent in the poetry. But if the failure is due to the thing he has proposed to do—if he has represented a horse as throwing out both his off legs at once, or introduced technical inaccuracies in medicine, for example, or in any other art—the error is not essential to the poetry. These are the points of view from which we should consider and answer the objections raised by the critics.

First we will suppose the poet has represented things 5 impossible according to the laws of his own art. It is an error; but the error may be justified, if the end of the art be thereby attained (the end being that already mentioned),—if, that is, the effect of this or any other part of the poem is thus rendered more striking. A case in point is the pursuit of Hector. If, however, the end might have been as well, or better, attained without violating the special rules of the poetic art, the error is not justified: for every kind of error should, if possible, be avoided.

Again, does the error touch the essentials of the poetic art, or some accident of it? For example,—not to know that a hind has no horns is a less serious matter than to paint it inartistically.

Further, if it be objected that the description is not 6

δεῖ—οἶον καὶ Σοφοκλῆς ἔφη αὐτὸς μὲν οἶους δεῖ ποιεῖν,  
 Εὐριπίδην δὲ οἶοι εἰσίν—ταύτῃ λυτέον. εἰ δὲ μηδετέρως, 7  
 40 ὅτι οὕτω φασίν· οἶον τὰ περὶ θεῶν, ἴσως γὰρ οὕτε  
 βέλτιον οὕτω λέγειν οὐτ' ἀληθῆ, ἀλλ' <εἰ> ἔτυχεν  
 1461 a ὥσπερ Ξενοφάνει· ἀλλ' οὖν φασι. τὰ δὲ ἴσως οὐ  
 βέλτιον μὲν, ἀλλ' οὕτως εἶχεν, οἶον τὰ περὶ τῶν ὄπλων,  
 “ἔγχεα δὲ σφιν Ὅρθ' ἐπὶ σαυρωτήρος.”<sup>1</sup> οὕτω γὰρ  
 τότ' ἐνόμιζον, ὥσπερ καὶ νῦν Ἰλλυριοί. περὶ δὲ τοῦ 8  
 5 καλῶς ἢ μὴ καλῶς ἢ εἰρηταί τινι ἢ πέπρακται, οὐ μόνον  
 σκεπτέον εἰς αὐτὸ τὸ πεπραγμένον ἢ εἰρημένον βλέποντα,  
 εἰ σπουδαῖον ἢ φαῦλον, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὸν πράττοντα ἢ  
 λέγοντα, πρὸς δὴν ἢ ὅτε ἢ ὅφρ' ἢ οὐ ἔνεκεν, οἶον ἢ μερίζονος  
 ἀγαθοῦ, ἵνα γένηται, ἢ μερίζονος κακοῦ, ἵνα ἀπογένηται.  
 10 τὰ δὲ πρὸς τὴν λέξιν ὁρῶντα δεῖ διαλύειν, οἶον γλώττη 9  
 “οὐρήας μὲν πρῶτον.”<sup>2</sup> ἴσως γὰρ οὐ τοὺς ἡμίονους λέγει  
 ἀλλὰ τοὺς φύλακας, καὶ τὸν Δόλωνα “ὅς ῥ' ἢ τοι εἶδος  
 μὲν ἔην κακός”<sup>3</sup> οὐ τὸ σῶμα ἀσύμμετρον ἀλλὰ τὸ  
 πρόσωπον αἰσχροῦν, τὸ γὰρ εὐειδὲς οἱ Κρῆτες εὐπρόσ-  
 15 ωπον καλοῦσι· καὶ τὸ “ζωρότερον δὲ κέραει”<sup>4</sup> οὐ τὸ  
 ἄκρατον ὥς οἰνόφλυξιν ἀλλὰ τὸ θᾶπτον. τὸ δὲ κατὰ 10

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad* x. 152.<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* xxiii. 111, 115 (Verrall), potius quam i. 50.<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* x. 316.<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* ix. 203.

39. Εὐριπίδην Heinsius: *εὐριπίδης* codd., tuetur Gomperz, cf. 1448 a 37  
 (ἀθηναῖοι codd.). 40. οὕτω apogr.: οὕτε A°. 41. *ei con.* Vahlen.  
 1461 a 1. *ξενοφάνει* vel *ξενοφάνης* apogr.: *ξενοφάνη* A°: *παρὰ Ξενοφάνει*  
 Ritter. οὖν Tyrwhitt: οὐ A°, οὖν rec. A°: οὕτω Spengel. 7. *ei*  
 apogr.: ἢ A°. 8. Commate distincti post λέγοντα: <ἢ> πρὸς δὴν  
 Carroll. οἶον ἢ A°: οἶον *ei* apogr. 9. ἢ rec. A° add. 16.  
 τὸ δὲ A°: τὰ δὲ Spengel.

true to fact, the poet may perhaps reply,—‘But the objects are as they ought to be’: just as Sophocles said that he drew men as they ought to be; Euripides, as they are. In this way the objection may be met. If, however, the representation be of neither kind, the poet may answer,—‘This is how men say the thing is.’ This applies to tales about the gods. It may well be that these stories are not higher than fact nor yet true to 1461 a fact: they are, very possibly, what Xenophanes says of them. But anyhow, ‘this is what is said.’ Again, a description may be no better than the fact: ‘still, it was the fact’; as in the passage about the arms: ‘Upright upon their butt-ends stood the spears.’ This was the custom then, as it now is among the Illyrians.

Again, in examining whether what has been said or 8 done by some one is poetically right or not, we must not look merely to the particular act or saying, and ask whether it is poetically good or bad. We must also consider by whom it is said or done, to whom, when, in whose interest, or for what end; whether, for instance, it be to secure a greater good, or avert a greater evil.

Other difficulties may be resolved by due regard to the 9 diction. We may note a rare word, as in *οὐρήας μὲν πρῶτον*, where the poet perhaps employs *οὐρήας* not in the sense of mules, but of sentinels. So, again, of Dolon: ‘ill-favoured indeed he was to look upon.’ It is not meant that his body was ill-shaped, but that his face was ugly; for the Cretans use the word *εὐειδής*, ‘well-favoured,’ to denote a fair face. Again, *ζωρότερον δὲ κέρασε*, ‘mix the drink livelier,’ does not mean ‘mix it stronger’ as for hard drinkers, but ‘mix it quicker.



μεταφορὰν εἴρηται, οἶον “πάντες μὲν ῥα θεοὶ τε καὶ  
 ἄνδρες Εὐδον παννύχιοι.”<sup>1</sup> ἅμα δέ φησιν “ἦ τοι ὄτ’  
 ἐς πεδῖον τὸ Τρωικὸν ἀθρήσειεν, Αὐλῶν συρίγγων θ’  
 20 ὄμαδον.”<sup>2</sup> τὸ γὰρ πάντες ἀντὶ τοῦ πολλοὶ κατὰ μετα-  
 φορὰν εἴρηται, τὸ γὰρ πᾶν πολὺ τι· καὶ τὸ “οἷη δ’  
 ἄμμορος”<sup>3</sup> κατὰ μεταφοράν, τὸ γὰρ γνωριμώτατον μόνον.  
 κατὰ δὲ προσφθίαν, ὥσπερ Ἰππίας ἔλυνεν ὁ Θάσιος τὸ 11  
 “δίδομεν δέ οἱ”<sup>4</sup> καὶ “τὸ μὲν οὐ καταπύθεται ὄμβρῳ.”<sup>5</sup>  
 25 τὰ δὲ διαίρεισι, οἶον Ἐμπεδοκλῆς “αἶψα δὲ θνήτ’ 12  
 ἐφύοντο, τὰ πρὶν μάθον ἀθάνατ’ <εἶναι> Ζωρά τε πρὶν  
 κέκρητο.” τὰ δὲ ἀμφιβολία, “παρῆχκεν δὲ πλέω 13  
 νύξ.”<sup>6</sup> τὸ γὰρ πλείω ἀμφίβολόν ἐστιν. τὰ δὲ κατὰ 14  
 τὸ ἔθος τῆς λέξεως· τῶν κεκραμένων <οἰοῦν> οἶνόν

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad* ii. 1, ἄλλοι μὲν ῥα θεοὶ τε καὶ ἄνδρες ἱπποκορυσταὶ  
 εὐδον παννύχιοι.

*Ib.* x. 1, ἄλλοι μὲν παρὰ νηυσὶν ἀριστῆες Παναχαϊῶν  
 εὐδον παννύχιοι.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* x. 11, ἦ τοι ὄτ’ ἐς πεδῖον τὸ Τρωικὸν ἀθρήσειεν,  
 θαύμαζεν πυρὰ πολλὰ τὰ καίετο Ἰλιόθι πρό,  
 αὐλῶν συρίγγων τ’ ἐνοπὴν ὄμαδόν τ’ ἀνθρώπων.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* xviii. 489, οἷη δ’ ἄμμορός ἐστι λοστρῶν Ὠκεανοῖο.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* xxi. 297, δίδομεν δέ οἱ εὖχος ἀρέσθαι. Sed in *Iliade* ii. 15 (de  
 quo hic agitur) Τρώεσσι δὲ κῆδε’ ἐφῆπται.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* xxiii. 328, τὸ μὲν οὐ καταπύθεται ὄμβρῳ.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* x. 251, μάλᾳ γὰρ νύξ ἀνεται, ἐγγύθι δ’ ἥως,  
 ὄστρον δὲ δὴ προβέβηκε, παρῆχκεν δὲ πλέων νύξ  
 τῶν δύο μοιράων, τριτάτῃ δ’ ἔτι μοῖρα λείλειπται.

17. πάντες Gräfenhan: ἄλλοι A°. 18. ἱπποκορυσταὶ post ἄνδρες add.  
 Christ, habuit iam Σ, cf. Arab. ‘ceteri quidem homines et dei qui equis  
 armati insident.’ 20. τοῦ apogr.: om. A°. 26. εἶναι add. Vettori  
 collato Athenaeo, x. 423. ζωρά Athenaeus: ζῶα codd. τε <δ> πρὶν  
 Gomperz sec. Bergk. 27. κέκρητο A°, i rec. sup. scr.: κέκριτο apogr.:  
 κρητα Karsten ed. Empedocles. πλέω A°: πλέον apogr.: πλέων  
 Ald. 28. πλείω: πλείον vel πλέον apogr. 29. οἰοῦν add. Tucker.  
 <ῥα> τῶν κεκραμένων Vahlen: <ῥα πο> τῶν κεκραμένων Ueberweg:  
 πᾶν κεκραμένον Bursian: <ἐνια> olim conieci ante οἶνον.;



Sometimes an expression is metaphorical, as 'Now all 10 gods and men were sleeping through the night,'—while at the same time the poet says: 'Often indeed as he turned his gaze to the Trojan plain, he marvelled at the sound of flutes and pipes.' 'All' is here used metaphorically for 'many,' all being a species of many. So in the verse,—'alone she hath no part . . .', οἷη, 'alone,' is metaphorical; for the best known may be called the only one.

Again, the solution may depend upon accent or 11 breathing. Thus Hippias of Thasos solved the difficulties in the lines,—*δίδομεν* (*διδόμεν*) *δέ οἱ*, and *τὸ μὲν οὖ* (*οὐ*) *καταπύθεται ὄμβρῳ*.

Or again, the question may be solved by punctuation, 12 as in Empedocles,—'Of a sudden things became mortal that before had learnt to be immortal, and things unmixed before mixed.'

Or again, by ambiguity of construction,—as in 13 *παράχρηκεν δὲ πλέω νύξ*, where the word *πλέω* is ambiguous.

Or by the usage of language. Thus any mixed 14 drink is called *οἶνος*, 'wine.' Hence Ganymede is said

30 φασιν εἶναι, [ὅθεν πεποίηται “*κνημὶς νεοτεύκτου κασσιτέραιοι*,”]<sup>1</sup> ὅθεν εἴρηται ὁ Γανυμήδης “*Διὶ οἶνοχοεύνει*,”<sup>2</sup> οὐ πινόντων οἶνον, καὶ χαλκέας τοὺς τὸν σίδηρον ἐργαζομένους. εἴη δ' ἂν τοῦτό γε <καὶ> κατὰ μεταφοράν. 15  
δεῖ δὲ καὶ ὅταν ὄνομά τι ὑπεναντίωμά τι δοκῇ σημαίνειν, 35 ἐπισκοπεῖν ποσαχῶς ἂν σημαῖνοι τοῦτο ἐν τῷ εἰρημένῳ, οἶον τὸ “*τῇ ῥ' ἔσχετο χάλκεον ἔγχος*,”<sup>3</sup> τὸ ταύτῃ κωλυ- 16  
θῆναι ποσαχῶς ἐνδέχεται. ὦδὶ <δὲ> [ἢ ὥς] μάλιστ' 1461 b ἂν τις ὑπολάβοι, κατὰ τὴν καταντικρὺ ἢ ὥς Γλαύκων λέγει, ὅτι ἔνια ἀλόγως προυπολαμβάνουσιν καὶ αὐτοὶ καταψηφισάμενοι συλλογίζονται καὶ ὥς εἰρηκότος ὃ τι δοκεῖ ἐπιτιμῶσιν, ἂν ὑπεναντίον ἢ τῇ αὐτῶν οἴσῃ. 5  
τοῦτο δὲ πέπονθε τὰ περὶ Ἰκάριον. οἴονται γὰρ αὐτὸν Λάκων~~α~~ εἶναι· ἄτοπον οὖν τὸ μὴ ἐντυχεῖν τὸν Τηλέμαχον αὐτῷ εἰς Λακεδαίμονα ἐλθόντα. τὸ δ' ἴσως ἔχει ὥσπερ οἱ Κεφαλῆνές φασιν· παρ' αὐτῶν γὰρ γῆμαι λέγουσι τὸν Ὀδυσσέα καὶ εἶναι Ἰκάδιον ἀλλ' οὐκ Ἰκά- 10  
ριον. δι' ἀμάρτημα δὴ τὸ πρόβλημα εἰκὸς ἐστίν. ὅλως 17  
δὲ τὸ ἀδύνατον μὲν πρὸς τὴν ποίησιν ἢ πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον

<sup>1</sup> *Πιάδ* xxi. 592.<sup>2</sup> *Ιβ.* xx. 234.<sup>3</sup> *Ιβ.* xx. 272, τῇ ῥ' ἔσχετο μέλιων ἐγχος.

30. ὅθεν πεποίηται . . . κασσιτέραιο *occlus*. M. Schmidt. 31. ὅθεν εἴρηται . . . οἶνον in codd. post ἐργαζομένους, huc revocavit Maggi *oc.* cod. Lampridii. 33. καὶ add. Heinsius. 35. σημαῖνοι olim Vahlen: σημαῖνοιε A<sup>o</sup>: σημήνειεν vel σημαίνειε apogr.: σημήνει Vahlen ed. 3. 36–38. οἶον τὸ <ἐν τῷ> . . . τὸ ταύτῃ κωλυθῆναι [ποσαχῶς] ἐνδέχεται διπλῶς, ἢ πῶς μάλιστ' ἂν τις κ.τ.λ. M. Schmidt. 37. δὲ addidi: ἢ ὥς *occlus*. Bywater. ὦδὶ ἢ <ὦδὶ>, ὥς conl. Vahlen: ἐνδέχεται· ὦδὶ ἢ ὥς μάλιστ' ἂν τις ὑπολάβοι, Ueberweg. Interpuncterunt post ὦδὶ et ὑπολάβοι plerique edd. 1461 b 2. ἔνια: ἔνιοι Vettori. 3. εἰρηκότος ὃ τι Castelvetro: εἰρηκότες ὅτι A<sup>o</sup>. 4. αὐτῶν Heinsius: αὐτῶν codd. 8. αὐτῶν Bekker: αὐτῶν codd. 10. δι' ἀμάρτημα Maggi: διαμάρτημα codd., Bekker. ὃς Gompertz: δὲ codd. <εἶναι> εἰκὸς ἐστίν Hermann, fort. recte: (cf. εἰκὸς ἐστὶ <γενέσθαι> Gompertz). 11. <φ> πρὸς Ald., Bekker, fort. recte.

'to pour the wine to Zeus,' though the gods do not drink wine. So too workers in iron are called χαλκείας, or workers in bronze. This, however, may also be taken as a metaphor.

Again, when a word seems to involve some incon- 15  
sistency of meaning, we should consider how many  
senses it may bear in the particular passage. For 16  
example: 'there was stayed the spear of bronze'—we  
should ask in how many ways we may take 'being  
checked there.' The true mode of interpretation is the  
1461 b precise opposite of what Glaucus mentions. Critics, he  
says, jump at certain groundless conclusions; they pass  
adverse judgment and then proceed to reason on it; and,  
assuming that the poet has said whatever they happen  
to think, find fault if a thing is inconsistent with their  
own fancy. The question about Icarius has been treated  
in this fashion. The critics imagine he was a Lacedae-  
monian. They think it strange, therefore, that Tele-  
machus should not have met him when he went to  
Lacedaemon. But the Cephallenian story may perhaps  
be the true one. They allege that Odysseus took a wife  
from among themselves, and that her father was Icadius  
not Icarius. It is merely a mistake, then, that gives  
plausibility to the objection.

In general, the impossible must be justified by 17  
reference to artistic requirements, or to the higher

ἡ πρὸς τὴν δόξαν δεῖ ἀάγειν. πρὸς τε γὰρ τὴν ποιήσιν  
 αἰρετώτερον πιθανὸν ἀδύνατον ἢ ἀπίθανον καὶ δυνατόν.  
 <καὶ ἴσως ἀδύνατον> τοιούτους εἶναι, οἷους Ζεῦξις  
 15 ἔγραφεν, ἀλλὰ βέλτιον· τὸ γὰρ παράδειγμα δεῖ ὑπερ-  
 ἔχειν. πρὸς <δ'> ἃ φασιν, τᾶλογα· οὕτω τε καὶ ὅτι  
 ποτὲ οὐκ ἄλογόν ἐστιν· εἰκὸς γὰρ καὶ παρὰ τὸ εἰκὸς  
 γίνεσθαι. τὰ δ' ὑπεναντίως εἰρημένα οὕτω σκοπεῖν, 18  
 ὥσπερ οἱ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἔλεγχοι, εἰ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ πρὸς τὸ  
 20 αὐτὸ καὶ ὡσαύτως, ὥστε καὶ λυτέον ἢ πρὸς ἃ αὐτὸς  
 λέγει ἢ ὃ ἂν φρόνιμος ὑποθῇται. ὀρθὴ δ' ἐπιτίμησις 19  
 καὶ ἀλογία καὶ μοχθηρία, ὅταν μὴ ἀνάγκης οὔσης μὴθὲν  
 χρῆσθαι τῷ ἀλόγῳ, ὥσπερ Εὐριπίδης τῷ Αἰγεί, ἢ τῇ  
 πονηρίᾳ, ὥσπερ ἐν Ὁρέστη τοῦ Μενελάου. τὰ μὲν οὖν 20  
 25 ἐπιτιμήματα ἐκ πέντε εἰδῶν φέρουσιν, ἢ γὰρ ὡς ἀδύνατα  
 ἢ ὡς ἄλογα ἢ ὡς βλαβερά ἢ ὡς ὑπεναντία ἢ ὡς παρὰ  
 τὴν ὀρθότητα τὴν κατὰ τέχνην. αἱ δὲ λύσεις ἐκ τῶν  
 εἰρημένων ἀριθμῶν σκεπτέαι, εἰσὶν δὲ δώδεκα.

XXVI πότερον δὲ βελτίων ἢ ἐποποιικὴ μίμησις ἢ ἡ τραγική,  
 30 διαπορήσειεν ἄν τις. εἰ γὰρ ἡ ἥττον φορτικὴ βελτίων,  
 τοιαύτη δ' ἢ πρὸς βελτίους θεατὰς ἐστὶν ἀεὶ, λίαν δῆλον

14. <καὶ ἴσως ἀδύνατον> Gomperz, sec. Margoliouth, collato Arabe ('fortasse enim impossibile est . . .'): καὶ εἰ ἀδύνατον iam coni. Vahlen. οἷους Ald., Bekker: οἷων codd. 16. δ' add. Ueberweg (coni. Vahlen). 18. ὑπεναντίως Twining, cf. Arab. 'quae dicta sunt in modum contrarii': ὡς ὑπεναντία Heinsius: ὑπεναντία ὡς codd. 20. ὥστε καὶ αὐτὸν codd.: ὥστε καὶ λυτέον M. Schmidt: οὕτως τε καὶ εἰ καθ' αὐτὸν coni. Christ. 21. φρόνιμος apogr.: φρόνημον A°, φρόνιμον rec. A°. 22. ἀλογία καὶ μοχθηρία Vahlen: ἀλογία καὶ μοχθηρία codd., serv. Christ, del. Spengel. Fort. <πρὸς> μὴθὲν Gomperz. 23. τῷ Αἰγεί ἢ τῇ apogr. (margo): τῷ αἰγείτῃ A°. 29. βελτίων apogr.: βέλτιον A°. 31. δ' ἢ apogr.: δὴ A°. del, λίαν Vahlen: δειλίαν codd.

reality, or to received opinion. With respect to the requirements of art, a probable impossibility is to be preferred to a thing improbable and yet possible. Again, it may be impossible that there should be men such as Zeuxis painted. 'Yes,' we say, 'but the impossible is the higher thing; for the ideal type must surpass the reality.' To justify the irrational, we appeal to what is commonly said to be. In addition to which, we urge that the irrational sometimes does not violate reason; just as 'it is <sup>possible</sup> probable that a thing may happen contrary to probability.'

Things that sound contradictory should be examined 18 by the same rules as in dialectical refutation—whether the same thing is meant, in the same relation, and in the same sense. We should therefore solve the question by reference to what the poet says himself, or to what is tacitly assumed by a person of intelligence.

The element of the irrational, and, similarly, depravity 19 of character, are justly censured when there is no inner necessity for introducing them. Such is the irrational element in the Aegeus of Euripides, and the badness of Menelaus in the Orestes.

Thus, there are five sources from which critical 20 objections are drawn. Things are censured either as impossible, or irrational, or morally hurtful, or contradictory, or contrary to artistic correctness. The answers should be sought under the twelve heads above mentioned.

XXVI The question may be raised whether the Epic or Tragic mode of imitation is the higher. If the more refined art is the higher, and the more refined in every case is that which appeals to the better sort of audience,

ὅτι ἡ ἅπαντα μιμουμένη φορτική· ὡς γὰρ οὐκ αἰσθανο-  
 μένων ἂν μὴ αὐτὸς προσθῇ, πολλὴν κίνησιν κινούνται,  
 οἷον οἱ φαῦλοι αὐληταὶ κυλιόμενοι ἂν δίσκον δέη μιμεῖ-  
 35 σθαι, καὶ ἔλκοντες τὸν κορυφαῖον ἂν Σκύλλαν αὐλῶσιν·  
 ἡ μὲν οὖν τραγῳδία τοιαύτη ἐστίν, ὡς καὶ οἱ πρότερον 2  
 τοὺς ὑστέρους αὐτῶν ᾤοντο ὑποκριτάς· ὡς λίαν γὰρ  
 ὑπερβάλλοντα πίθηκον ὁ Μυννίσκος τὸν Καλλιπιδὴν  
 1462 a ἐκάλει, τοιαύτη δὲ δόξα καὶ περὶ Πινδάρου ἦν· ὡς δ'  
 οὔτοι ἔχουσι πρὸς αὐτούς, ἡ δὲ τέχνη πρὸς τὴν  
 ἐποποιίαν ἔχει· τὴν μὲν οὖν πρὸς θεατὰς ἐπικεκίς φασιν  
 εἶναι <οἱ> οὐδὲν δέονται τῶν σχημάτων, τὴν δὲ τραγι-  
 5 κὴν πρὸς φαῦλους· εἰ οὖν φορτική, χείρων δῆλον ὅτι ἂν 3  
 εἴη. / πρῶτον μὲν <οὖν> οὐ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἡ κατηγορία  
 ἀλλὰ τῆς ὑποκριτικῆς, ἐπεὶ ἔστι περιεργάζεσθαι τοῖς  
 σημείοις καὶ ῥαψδοῦντα, ὅπερ [ἐστὶ] Σωσίστρατος, καὶ  
 διάδοντα, ὅπερ ἐποιεῖ Μνασίθεος ὁ Ὀπούντιος. εἶτα  
 10 οὐδὲ κίνησις ἅπασα ἀποδοκιμαστέα, εἴπερ μὴδ' ὄρχησις,  
 ἀλλ' ἡ φαύλων, ὅπερ καὶ Καλλιπιδὴ ἐπετιμᾶτο καὶ  
 νῦν ἄλλοις ὡς οὐκ ἐλευθέρας γυναικάς μιμουμένων. ἔτι  
 ἡ τραγῳδία καὶ ἄνευ κινήσεως ποιεῖ τὸ αὐτῆς, ὥσπερ ἡ  
 ἐποποιία· διὰ γὰρ τοῦ ἀναγινώσκειν φανερὰ ὅποια τίς  
 15 ἐστίν· εἰ οὖν ἐστὶ τά γ' ἄλλα κρείττων, τοῦτό γε οὐκ  
 ἀναγκαῖον αὐτῇ ὑπάρχειν. ἔστι δ' ἐπεὶ τὰ πάντ' ἔχει 4  
 ὅσαπερ ἡ ἐποποιία, καὶ γὰρ τῷ μέτρῳ ἔξεστι χρῆσθαι,

33. κινούνται apogr.: κινούνται Δ<sup>c</sup>. 1462 a 2. ἔχουσι apogr.: δ'  
 ἔχουσι Δ<sup>c</sup>. αὐτοὺς Hermann: αὐτοὺς codd. 4. οἱ add. Vettori:  
 ἐπεὶ Christ. 5. εἰ apogr.: ἡ Δ<sup>c</sup>. 6. οὖν add. Bywater, Ussing.  
 8. ἐστὶ seclus. Spengel. 9. διάδοντα apogr.: διαδόντα Δ<sup>c</sup>. 13.  
 αὐτῆς apogr.: αὐτῆς Δ<sup>c</sup>. 16. αὐτῇ apogr.: αὐτῇ Δ<sup>c</sup>. ἔστι δ'  
 ἐπεὶ τὰ Gomperz: ἐστι δ', ὅτι Usener: ἔπειτα διότι codd.

the art which imitates anything and everything is manifestly most unrefined. The audience is supposed to be too dull to comprehend unless something of their own is thrown in by the performers, who therefore indulge in restless movements. Bad flute-players twist and twirl, if they have to represent 'the quoit-throw,' or hustle the coryphaeus when they perform the 'Scylla.' Tragedy, 2 it is said, has this same defect. We may compare the opinion that the older actors entertained of their successors. Mynniscus used to call Callippides 'ape' on account of the extravagance of his action, and the same 1462 a view was held of Pindarus. Tragic art, then, as a whole, stands to Epic in the same relation as the younger to the elder actors. So we are told that Epic poetry is addressed to a cultivated audience, who do not need gesture; Tragedy, to an inferior public. Being then 3 unrefined, it is evidently the lower of the two.

Now, in the first place, this censure attaches not to the poetic but to the histrionic art; for gesticulation may be equally overdone in epic recitation, as by Sosi-stratus, or in lyrical competition, as by Mnasi-theus the Opuntian. Next, all action is not to be condemned—any more than all dancing—but only that of bad performers. Such was the fault found in Callippides, as also in others of our own day, who are censured for representing degraded women. Again, Tragedy like Epic 4 poetry produces its effect even without action; it reveals its power by mere reading. If, then, in all other respects it is superior, this fault, we say, is not inherent in it.

† And superior it is, because it has all the epic 4 elements—it may even use the epic metre—with the ( )



καὶ ἔτι οὐ μικρὸν μέρος τὴν μουσικὴν καὶ τὰς ὕψεις, δι'  
 ἃς αἱ ἡδοναὶ συνίστανται ἐναργέστατα. εἶτα καὶ τὸ  
 20 ἐναργὲς ἔχει καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀναγνώσει καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων.  
 1462 b ἔτι τῷ ἐν ἐλάττονι μήκει τὸ τέλος τῆς μιμήσεως εἶναι· 5  
 τὸ γὰρ ἁθροώτερον ἥδιον ἢ πολλῷ κεκραμένον τῷ χρόνῳ·  
 λέγω δ' οἶον εἴ τις τὸν Οἰδῖπον θεῖη τὸν Σοφοκλέους  
 ἐν ἔπεσιν ὅσοις ἡ Ἰλιάς. ἔτι ἡττον [ἡ] μία μίμησις ἢ 6  
 5 τῶν ἐποποιῶν· σημεῖον δέ· ἐκ γὰρ ὅποιασούν [μιμήσεως]  
 πλείους τραγῳδαίαι γίνονται· ὥστε ἐὰν μὲν ἓνα μῦθον  
 ποιῶσιν, ἢ βραχέως δεικνύμενον μύθῳ φαίνεσθαι, ἢ  
 ἀκολουθοῦντα τῷ συμμέτρῳ μήκει ὑδαρῇ. \* \* λέγω δὲ  
 οἶον ἐὰν ἐκ πλείονων πράξεων ἢ συγκεκριμένη, ὥσπερ ἡ  
 10 Ἰλιάς ἔχει πολλὰ τοιαῦτα μέρη καὶ ἡ Ὀδύσσεια ἃ καὶ  
 καθ' ἑαυτὰ ἔχει μέγεθος· καίτοι ταῦτα τὰ ποιήματα  
 συνέστηκεν ὥς ἐνδέχεται ἄριστα καὶ ὅτι μάλιστα μᾶς  
 πράξεως μίμησις./ εἰ οὖν τούτοις τε διαφέρει πᾶσιν καὶ 7  
 ἔτι τῷ τῆς τέχνης ἔργῳ (δεῖ γὰρ οὐ τὴν τυχεύσαν ἡδονὴν  
 15 ποιεῖν αὐτὰς ἀλλὰ τὴν εἰρημένην), φανερόν ὅτι κρείττων  
 ἂν εἴη μᾶλλον τοῦ τέλους τυγχάνουσα τῆς ἐποποιίας.  
 περὶ μὲν οὖν τραγῳδίας καὶ ἐποποιίας, καὶ αὐτῶν 8  
 καὶ τῶν εἰδῶν καὶ τῶν μερῶν, καὶ πόσα καὶ τί διαφέρει,  
 καὶ τοῦ εὖ ἢ μὴ τίνες αἰτίαι, καὶ περὶ ἐπιτιμήσεων καὶ  
 20 λύσεων, εἰρήσθω τοσαῦτα. \* \* \*

18. καὶ τὰς ὕψεις seclus. Spengel: collocavit post ἐναργέστατα Gomperz, qui δι' ἧς legit: καὶ τὴν ὕψιν Ald., Bekker. δι' ἃς vel αἷς coni. Vahlen: δι' ἧς codd. 20. ἀναγνώσει Maggi: ἀναγνωρίσει Δ°. 21. τῷ: τὸ Winstanley, Gomperz. 1462 b 2. ἥδιον ἢ Maggi: ἡδέιον ἢ apogr.: ἡδονὴ Δ°. 3. θεῖη θεῖη Δ°. 4. Ἀλτ. ἢ om. Ald. 5. μιμήσεως seclus. Gomperz. 7. μελουργ Gomperz praesunte Tyrwhitt, fort. recte. 8. συμμέτρῳ Bernays: τοῦ μέτρον codd. Post ὑδαρῇ, <ἐὰν δὲ πλείους> Ald., Bekker: <λέγω δὲ οἶον \* \* ἂν δὲ μή, οὐ μία ἢ μίμησις> supplendum coni. Vahlen: <ἐὰν δὲ πλείους, οὐ μία ἢ μίμησις> Teichmüller: <ἄλλως δὲ ποικίλον> Gomperz. 10. ἃ add. apogr. 11. καίτοι ταῦτα τὰ Ald.: καὶ τοιαῦτ' ἄλλα Δ° et plerique codd. 19. ἢ apogr.: εἰ Δ°.

music and scenic effects as important accessories; and these produce the most vivid of pleasures. <sup>2</sup> Further, it has vividness of impression in reading as well as in representation. <sup>3</sup> Moreover, the art attains its end within 5, narrower limits; for the concentrated effect is more pleasurable than one which is spread over a long time and so diluted. What, for example, would be the effect of the Oedipus of Sophocles, if it were cast into a form as long as the Iliad? Once more, the Epic imitation 6 has less unity; as is shown by this,—that any Epic poem will furnish subjects for several tragedies. Now if the story be worked into a unity, it will, if concisely told, appear truncated; or, if it conform to the Epic canon of length, it will seem weak and watery. \* \* \*

What I mean by a story composed of several actions may be illustrated from the Iliad and Odyssey, which have many parts, each with a certain magnitude of its own. Yet these poems are as perfect as possible in structure; each is, in the highest degree attainable, an imitation of a single action.

✓ If, then, Tragedy is superior to Epic poetry in all these 7 respects, and, moreover, fulfils its specific function better as an art—for each art ought to produce, not any chance pleasure, but the pleasure proper to it, as already stated—it plainly follows that Tragedy is the higher art, as attaining its end more perfectly.

Thus much may suffice concerning Tragic and Epic 8 poetry in general; their several kinds and parts, with the number of each and their differences; the causes that make a poem good or bad; the objections of the critics and the answers to these objections. \* \* \*

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# ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF POETRY AND THE FINE ARTS

## CHAPTER I

### ART AND NATURE


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ARISTOTLE, it must be premised at the outset, has not dealt with fine art in any separate treatise, he has formulated no theory of it, he has not marked the organic relation of the arts to one another. While his love of logical distinctions, his tendency to rigid demarcation, is shown even in the province of literary criticism by the care with which in the *Poetics* he maps out the subordinate divisions of his subject (the different modes of recognition, the elements of the plot, etc.), yet he nowhere classifies the various kinds of poetry; still less has he given a scientific grouping of the fine arts and exhibited their specific differences. We may confidently assert that many of the aesthetic problems which have been since raised never even occurred to his mind, though precise answers to almost all such questions have been extracted from his writings

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by the unwise zeal of his admirers. He has however left some leading principles which we shall endeavour to follow out.

There is a special risk at the present day attending any such attempt to bring together his fragmentary remarks and present them in a connected form. His philosophy has in it the germs of so much modern thought that we may, almost without knowing it, find ourselves putting into his mouth not his own language but that of Hegel. Nor is it possible to determine by general rules how far the thought that is implicit in a philosophical system, but which the author himself has not drawn out, is to be reckoned as an integral part of the system. } In any case, however, Aristotle's *Poetics* cannot be read apart from his other writings. No author is more liable to be misunderstood if studied piecemeal. The careless profusion with which he throws out the suggestions of the moment, leaving it to the intelligence or the previous knowledge of his readers to adjust his remarks and limit their scope, is in itself a possible source of misapprehension. It was an observation of Goethe that it needs some insight into Aristotle's general philosophy to understand what he says about the drama; that otherwise he confuses our studies; and that modern treatises on poetry have gone astray by seizing some accidental side of his doctrine. If it is necessary, then, to



interpret Aristotle by himself, ~~it~~ it will not be unfair in dealing with so coherent a thinker to credit him with seeing the obvious conclusions which flow from his principles, even when he has not formally stated them. > To bring out the lines of attachment which subsist between the correlated parts of his system is a very different thing from discovering in him ideas which, even if present in the germ, could only have ripened in another soil and under other skies.

The distinction between fine and useful art was first brought out fully by Aristotle. In the history of Greek art we are struck rather by the union between the two forms of art than by their independence. It was a loss for art when the spheres of use and beauty came in practice to be dissevered, when the useful object ceased to be decorative, and the things of common life no longer gave delight to the maker and to the user. But the theoretic distinction between fine and useful art needed to be laid down, and to Aristotle we owe the first clear conception of fine art as a free and independent activity of the mind, outside the domain both of religion and of politics, having an end distinct from that of education or moral improvement. He has not indeed left us any continuous discussion upon fine art. The *Poetics* furnishes no complete theory even of poetry, nor is it probable that this is altogether due to the

imperfect form in which this treatise has come down to us. But Aristotle is a systematic thinker, and numberless illustrations and analogies drawn from one or other of the arts, and scattered through his writings, show that he had given special attention to the significance of art in its widest sense; and that as he had formed a coherent idea of the place which art held in relation to nature, science, and morality, so too he had in his own mind thought out the relation in which the two branches of art stood to one another.

*fine* | 'Art imitates nature' (*ἡ τέχνη μιμνέται τὴν φύσιν*), says Aristotle, and the phrase has been repeated and has passed current as a summary of the Aristotelian doctrine of fine art. Yet the original saying was never intended to differentiate between fine and useful art; nor indeed could it possibly bear the sense that fine art is a copy or reproduction of natural objects. The use of the term 'nature' would in itself put the matter beyond dispute; for nature in Aristotle is not the outward world of created things; it is the creative force, the productive principle of the universe. The context in each case where the phrase occurs determines its precise application. In the *Physics*<sup>1</sup> the point of the comparison is that alike in art and in nature there is the union of matter (*ύλη*) with constitutive form (*εἶδος*), and that the knowledge

<sup>1</sup> *Phys.* ii. 2. 194 a 21.

of both elements is requisite for the natural philosopher as for the physician and the architect. In the *Meteorologica*<sup>1</sup> the reference is to cooking as an artificial mode of producing results similar to those produced by the spontaneous action of heat in the physical world; digestion (πέψις) itself (according to the medical theory of the day) being given as an instance of a process of cooking (έψησις) carried on by nature within the body. In the instances above quoted 'art' is limited by the context to useful art; but the analogy does not rest there. Art in its widest acceptance has, like nature, certain ends in view, and in the adaptation of means to ends catches hints from nature who is already in some sort an unconscious artist.

While art in general imitates the method of nature, the phrase has special reference to useful art, which learns from nature the precise end at which to aim. In the selection of the end she acts with infallible instinct, and her endeavour to attain it is on the whole successful. But at times she makes mistakes as indeed do the schoolmaster and

<sup>1</sup> *Meteor.* iv. 3. 381 b 6. The phrase 'Art imitates Nature' is also found in *de Mundo* 5. 396 b 12, which, however, cannot be reckoned among the genuine Aristotelian writings. There the order of the universe is explained to result from a union of opposites; and three illustrations, derived from painting, music, and grammar, are added of the mode in which art, in imitating nature's diversity, works out harmonious results.



the physician ;<sup>1</sup> failures rather than mistakes they should be called, for the fault is not hers ; her rational intention is liable to be frustrated by inherent flaws in the substances with which she is compelled to work. She is subject to limitations, and can only make the best of her material.<sup>2</sup>

The higher we ascend in the scale of being, the more does nature need assistance in carrying out her designs. Man, who is her highest creation, she brings into the world more helpless than any other animal,—unshod, unclad, unarmed.<sup>3</sup> But in his seeming imperfection lies man's superiority, for the fewer the finished appliances with which he is provided, the greater is his need for intellectual effort. By means of the rational faculty of art, with which nature has endowed him richly, he is able to come to her aid, and in ministering to his own necessities to fulfil her uncompleted purposes. Where from any cause nature fails, art steps in. Nature aims at producing health ; in her restorative processes we observe an instinctive capacity for self-curing.<sup>4</sup> But she does not always succeed, and the art of the physician makes good the defect.

<sup>1</sup> *Phys.* ii. 8. 199 a 33.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *de Part. Anim.* iv. 10. 687 a 15, ἡ δὲ φύσις ἐκ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων ποιεῖ τὸ βέλτιστον.

<sup>3</sup> *De Part. Anim.* iv. 10. 687 a 24.

<sup>4</sup> *Phys.* ii. 8. 199 b 30, ὥστ' εἰ ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ ἔνεστι τὸ ἐνεκά του, καὶ ἐν φύσει. μάλιστα δὲ δῆλον ὅταν τις ἰατρεὺς αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν· τοῦτ' γὰρ ἔοικεν ἡ φύσις.

He discovers one of the links of the chain which terminates in health, and uses nature's own machinery to start a series of movements which lead to the desired result.<sup>1</sup> Again, nature has formed man to be a 'political animal.'<sup>2</sup> Family and tribal life are stages on the way to a more complete existence, and the term of the process is reached when man enters into that higher order of community called the state. The state is indeed a natural institution, but needs the political art to organise it and to realise nature's full idea. The function, then, of the useful arts is in all cases 'to supply the deficiencies of nature';<sup>3</sup> and he who would be a master in any art must first discern

art  
supplem  
natu

<sup>1</sup> *Metaph.* vi. 7. 1032 b 6, γίνεται δὴ τὸ ὑγιὲς νοσήσαντος οὕτως· ἐπειδὴ τοδὶ ὑγίεια, ἀνάγκη εἰ ὑγιὲς ἔσται τοδὶ ὑπάρξαι, οἷον ὁμαλότητα, εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, θερμότητα. καὶ οὕτως αἰεὶ νοεῖ, ἕως ἂν ἀγάγῃ εἰς τοῦτο ὃ αὐτὸς δύναται ἔσχατον ποιεῖν. εἴτα ἤδη ἢ ἀπὸ τούτου κίνησις ποιήσις καλεῖται, ἢ ἐπὶ τὸ ὑγιαίνειν.

<sup>2</sup> *Pol.* i. 2. 1253 a 2, ἄνθρωπος φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῷον.

<sup>3</sup> *Pol.* iv. (vii.) 17. 1337 a 1-2, πᾶσα γὰρ τέχνη καὶ παιδεία τὸ προσλείπον βούλεται τῆς φύσεως ἀναπληροῦν. The context here, in its reference to education, limits the scope of τέχνη to useful art. In *Phys.* ii. 8. 199 a 15, ἡ τέχνη τὰ μὲν ἐπιτελεῖ ἃ ἡ φύσις ἀδυνατεῖ ~~εὐφραδίσασθαι~~, τὰ δὲ μιμνῆται it is probable that the distinction is not, as would at first sight seem, between useful and fine art, but between two aspects of useful art. The sentence is not quite logical in form, but the meaning is that useful art on the one hand satisfies those needs of man for which nature has not fully provided, on the other hand its processes are those of nature (μιμνῆται αἰ τὴν φύσιν). The two clauses respectively mark the end and the method of useful art. The main argument of the chapter is in favour of this view.

the true end by a study of nature's principles, and then employ the method which she suggests for the attainment of that end.

'Nature taught Art,' says Milton; and the same Aristotelian idea was in the mind of Dante, when he makes Virgil condemn usury as a departure from nature: 'Philosophy, to him who hears it, points out not in one place alone, how Nature takes her course from the Divine Intellect, and from its art. And, if thou note well thy Physics,<sup>1</sup> thou wilt find, not many pages from the first, that your art as far as it can, follows her (Nature), as the scholar does his master. . . . And because the usurer takes another way, he contemns Nature in herself, and in her follower (Art), placing elsewhere his hope.'<sup>2</sup> The phrase on which we have been commenting is the key to this passage: useful art supplements nature, and at the same time follows her guidance.

<sup>1</sup> *Phys.* ii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Inferno* xi. 97-111, Carlyle's Translation.

## CHAPTER II

### 'IMITATION' AS AN AESTHETIC TERM

THE term 'fine art' is not one that has been transmitted to us from the Greeks. Their phrase was the 'imitative arts' (*μιμητικαὶ τέχναι*), 'modes of imitation' (*μιμήσεις*),<sup>1</sup> or sometimes the 'liberal arts' (*ἐλευθέριοι τέχναι*). 'Imitation' as the common characteristic of the fine arts was not originated by Aristotle, nor even by Plato. The phrase had previously been current both in popular speech and literary idiom, and marked, in particular, the antithesis between this form of art and industrial production. The idea of imitation is connected in our minds with a want of creative freedom, with a literal or servile copying: and the word, as transmitted from Plato to Aristotle, was already tinged by some such disparaging associations. The Platonic view that the real world is a weak or

<sup>1</sup> He applies the term *μιμήσεις* only to poetry and music (*Poet.* i. 2), but the constant use of the verb *μιμείσθαι* or of the adjective *μιμητικός* in connexion with the other arts above enumerated proves that all alike are counted arts of imitation.

imperfect repetition of an ideal archetype led to the world of reality being regarded in a special sense, and on a still lower plane, as a world of mere imitation. Aristotle, as his manner was, accepted the current phrase and interpreted it anew. True, he may sometimes have been misled by its guidance, and not unfrequently his meaning is obscured by his adherence to the outworn formula. But he deepened and enriched its signification, looking at it from many sides and in the light of the masterpieces of Greek art and literature.

This will become apparent as we proceed. Meanwhile—if we may so far anticipate what is to follow—a crucial instance of the inadequacy of the literal English equivalent ‘imitation’ to express the Aristotelian idea is afforded by a passage in ch. xxv. The artist may ‘imitate things *as they ought to be*’:<sup>1</sup> he may place before him an unrealised ideal. We see at once that there is no question here of bare imitation, of a literal transcript of the world of reality.

It has been already mentioned that ‘to imitate nature,’ in the popular acceptance of the phrase, is not for Aristotle the function of fine art. The actual objects of aesthetic imitation are threefold—*ἡθῶν, μύθων, πραγμάτων*.<sup>2</sup> By *ἡθῶν* are meant the

<sup>1</sup> *Post. xiv. 1*, ἀναγκὴ μιμεῖσθαι τοὺς ἄλλους τὸν ἀνθρώπον ὡς τὸ ἰδέεσθαι, ἢ γὰρ οὕτως ὅτι ἡ ἀρετή, ἢ οὕτως ὡς αὐτὴ καὶ ὁ κακὸς, ἢ οὕτως ὡς αὐτὴ καὶ ὁ κακὸς. See also pp. 157 f., 361.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Post. i. 3*.

characteristic moral qualities, the permanent dispositions of the mind, which reveal a certain condition of the will: πάθη are the more transient emotions, the passing moods of feeling: πράξεις are actions in their proper and inward sense. An act viewed merely as an external process or result, one of a series of outward phenomena, is not the true object of aesthetic imitation. The πράξις that art seeks to reproduce is mainly an inward process, a psychical energy working outwards; deeds, incidents, events, situations, being included under it so far as these spring from an inward act of will, *action*<sup>1</sup> or elicit some activity of thought or feeling.<sup>1</sup>

Here lies the explanation of the somewhat startling phrase used in the *Poetics*, ch. ii., that 'men in action' are the objects imitated by the fine arts:<sup>2</sup>—by all and not merely by dramatic or narrative poetry where action is more obviously represented. Everything that expresses the mental life, that reveals a rational personality, will fall within this larger sense of 'action.' Such actions are not necessarily processes extending over a period of time: they may realise themselves in a single moment; they may be summed up in a particular mood, a given situation. The phrase

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Eth. Nic.* i. 8. 1098 b 15, τὰς δὲ πράξεις καὶ τὰς ἐνεργείας τὰς ψυχικὰς περὶ ψυχὴν τίθεμεν. See also *infra* p. 327.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* ii. 1, ἐπεὶ δὲ μιμῶνται οἱ μιμούμενοι πράττοντας κ.τ.λ.

is virtually an equivalent for the ἡθῆ, πάθη, πράξεις above enumerated.

X The common original, then, from which all the arts draw is human life,—its mental processes, its spiritual movements, its outward acts issuing from deeper sources; in a word, all that constitutes the inward and essential activity of the soul. On this principle landscape and animals are not ranked among the objects of aesthetic imitation. The whole universe is not conceived of as the raw material of art. Aristotle's theory is in agreement with the practice of the Greek poets and artists of the classical period, who introduce the external world only so far as it forms a background of action, and enters as an emotional element into man's life and heightens the human interest.

We may now proceed to determine more nearly the meaning of 'imitation.'

X A work of art is a likeness (ὁμοίωμα) or reproduction of an original, and not a symbolic representation of it;<sup>1</sup> and this holds good whether the artist draws from a model in the real world or from an unrealised ideal in the mind. The distinction may be shown by Aristotle's own illustrations. A sign or symbol has no essential resemblance, no natural connexion, with the thing signified. Thus spoken words are symbols of

<sup>1</sup> This point is worked out in detail by Teichmüller, *Aristotelische Forschungen*, ii. 145-154.

mental states, written words are symbols of spoken words; the connexion between them is conventional.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand mental impressions are not signs or symbols, but copies of external reality, likenesses of the things themselves. In the act of sensuous perception objects stamp upon the mind an impress of themselves like that of a signet ring, and the picture (φάντασμα) so engraven on the memory is compared to a portrait (ζωγράφημα, εἰκὼν).<sup>2</sup> Thus the creations of art are, as it were, pictures which exist for the 'phantasy.'

Of this faculty, however, Aristotle does not give a very clear or consistent account. He defines it as "the movement which results upon an actual sensation": more simply we may define it as the after-effect of a sensation, the continued presence of an impression after the object which first excited it has been withdrawn from actual experience.'<sup>3</sup> As such it is brought in to explain the illusions of dreaming and other kindred

<sup>1</sup> *De Interpret.* i. 1. 16 a 3, ἔστι μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα, καὶ τὰ γραφόμενα τῶν ἐν τῇ φωνῇ. In ch. 2. 16 a 27 the connexion is said to be κατὰ συνθήκην.

<sup>2</sup> *De Mem. et Remin.* i. 450 a 27—451 a 17. Cf. *de Interpret.* i. 1. 16 a 7, where the παθήματα or mental impressions are said to be ὁμοιώματα of reality.

<sup>3</sup> E. Wallace, *Aristotle's Psychology*, Intr. p. lxxxvii: see the whole section relating to this subject, pp. lxxxvi.—xcvii. The definition is in *de Anim.* iii. 3. 429 a 1, ἡ φαντασία ἂν εἴη κίνησις ὑπὸ τῆς αἰσθήσεως τῆς κατ' ἐνέργειαν γιγνομένη. So *de Somno* 1. 459 a 17.



phenomena. But it is more than a receptivity of sense,<sup>1</sup> it is on the border-line between sense and thought. It is treated as an image-forming faculty, by which we can recall at will pictures previously presented to the mind<sup>2</sup> and may even accomplish some of the processes of thought.<sup>3</sup> It represents subjectively all the particular concrete objects perceived by the external senses. From these  
 ✓ 'phantasms' or representations of the imagination the intellect abstracts its ideas or universal concepts. Without the imagination the intellect  
 ✕ cannot work through lack of matter. The idea, therefore, which is purely intellectual, implies and contains in itself whatever is universal, that is  
 • intelligible, in the object of sense. When in default of a nearer equivalent we use the term 'imagination'—that is, an image-making power—we must  
 / remember that Aristotle's psychology does not admit of such a faculty as a creative imagination, which not merely reproduces objects passively perceived, but fuses together the things of thought and sense, and forms a new world of its own, recombining and transmuting the materials of experience.<sup>4</sup> This work is for Aristotle the result

<sup>1</sup> *De Anim.* iii. 3. 428 a 5-16.

<sup>2</sup> *De Anim.* iii. 3. 427 b 17-20.

<sup>3</sup> *De Anim.* iii. 10. 433 a 10.

<sup>4</sup> The idea of a creative power in man which transforms the materials supplied by the empirical world is not unknown either to

of the spontaneous and necessary union of intellect and sense.

We have thus advanced another step in the argument. *A work of art reproduces its original, not as it is in itself, but as it appears to the senses.* Art addresses itself not to the abstract reason but to the sensibility and image-making faculty; it is concerned with outward appearances; it employs illusions; its world is not that which is revealed by pure thought; it sees truth, but in its concrete manifestations, not as an abstract idea.

Important consequences follow from the doctrine of aesthetic semblance, first noted by Plato<sup>1</sup>—though in depreciation of fine art—and firmly apprehended by Aristotle. Art does not attempt to embody the objective reality of things, but only their sensible appearances. Indeed by the very principles of Aristotle's philosophy it can present no more than a semblance; for it impresses the artistic form upon a matter which is not proper to that form. Thus it severs itself from material

Plato or Aristotle, but it is not a separate faculty or denoted by a distinct name. In Philostratus (*circa* A.D. 210), *Vit. Apoll.* vi. 19, φαντασία is the active imagination as opposed to the faculty of μίμησις. φαντασία, ἔφη, ταῦτα (i.e. the sculptured forms of the gods by a Pheidias or Praxiteles) εἰργάσατο σοφωτέρα μμήσεως δημιουργός· μίμησις μὲν γὰρ δημιουργήσει ὃ εἶδεν, φαντασία δὲ καὶ ὃ μὴ εἶδεν.

<sup>1</sup> For the importance of this contribution to aesthetic theory see Bosanquet, *History of Aesthetic*, pp. 28–30.

reality and the corresponding wants. Herein lies  
 x the secret of its emancipating power. The real  
 x emotions, the positive needs of life, have always  
 in them some element of disquiet. By the union  
 of a form with a matter which in the world of  
 experience is alien to it, a magical effect is wrought.  
 The pressure of everyday reality is removed, and  
 the aesthetic emotion is released as an independent  
 activity. Art, then, moving in a world of images  
 and appearances, and creating after a pattern  
 existing in the mind, must be skilled in the use  
 of illusion. By this alone can it give coherence to  
 its creations and impart to its fictions an air of  
 reality. The doctrine of aesthetic semblance and  
 of τὸ πιθανόν, which depends on it, is carried so  
 far that the poet working by illusions 'ought  
 to prefer probable impossibilities to possible  
 improbabilities.'<sup>1</sup>

While all works of art are likenesses of an  
 original and have reference to a world indepen-  
 dently known, the various arts reflect the image  
 from without by different means and with more  
 or less directness and vividness.

Music

Music was held by Aristotle, as by the Greeks  
 generally, to be the most 'imitative' or represent-  
 ative of the arts. It is a direct image, a copy of  
 character. We generally think of it in a different  
 way. The emotion it suggests, the message it

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxiv. 10, xxv. 17 : see pp. 173 ff.


conveys, corresponds but little with a reality outside itself, with a world of feeling already known. We cannot test its truth by its accordance with any original. It is capable of expressing general and elementary moods of feeling, which will be variously interpreted by different hearers. It cannot render the finer shades of extra-musical emotion with any degree of certainty and precision. Its expressive power, its capacity to reproduce independent realities, is weak in proportion as the impression it produces is vivid and definite. But to Aristotle, who here accepts the traditions of his country, the very opposite seems true. Music is the express image and reflection of moral character. 'In rhythms and melodies we have the most realistic imitations of anger and mildness as well as of courage, temperance and all their opposites.'<sup>1</sup> Not only states of feeling but also strictly ethical qualities and dispositions of mind are reproduced by musical imitation, and on the close correspondence between the copy and the original depends the importance of music in the formation of character. Music in reflecting character moulds and influences it.

A partial explanation of the prevalence of such

<sup>1</sup> Pol. v. (viii.) 5. 1340 a 18, ἔστι δὲ ὁμοιώματα μάλιστα παρὰ τὰς ἀληθινὰς φύσεις ἐν τοῖς ῥυθμοῖς καὶ τοῖς μέλεσιν ὀργῆς καὶ πραότητος ἔτι δ' ἀνδρίας καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐναντίων τούτοις.

a view is to be found in the dependent position which music occupied among the Greeks. It was one of the accessories of poetry, to which it was strictly subordinate, and consisted of comparatively simple strains. Much of its meaning was derived from the associations it called up, and from the emotional atmosphere which surrounded it. It was associated with definite occasions and solemnities, it was accompanied by certain dances and attached to well-known words. 'When there are no words,' says Plato, 'it is very difficult to recognise the meaning of harmony or rhythm, or to see that any worthy object is imitated by them.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Laws* ii. 669 E. On the whole subject of Greek music see *The Modes of Ancient Greek Music* by D. B. Monro (Oxford 1894). Mr. Monro after insisting on the close connexion between words and melody thus proceeds: 'The beauty and even the persuasive effect of a voice depend, as we are more or less aware, in the first place upon the pitch or key in which it is set, and in the second place upon subtle variations of pitch, which give emphasis, or light and shade. Answering to the first of these elements, ancient music, if the main contention of this essay is right, has its system of Modes or keys. Answering to the second it has a series of scales in which the delicacy and variety of the intervals still fill us with wonder. In both these points modern music shows diminished resources. We have in the Keys the same or even a greater command of degrees of pitch; but we seem to have lost the close relation which once obtained between a note as the result of physical facts and the same note as an index of temper or emotion. A change of key affects us, generally speaking, like a change of colour or of movement—not as the heightening or soothing of a state of feeling. In respect of the second element of vocal expression, the rise and fall of the pitch, Greek music possessed in the multiplicity of its scales a range of expression to



But even apart from interpretative words it would seem that the ethical significance of music was maintained by Aristotle and his school. In the *Problems* we find it said, 'Melody even apart from words has an ethical quality.'<sup>1</sup> Though we may not be able entirely to comprehend the Greek point of view as to the moral import of music, we must bear in mind that the dominant element in Greek music was the rhythm; the spirit and meaning of any given composition was felt to reside especially here; and the doctrine which asserted the unique imitative capacity of music had for Aristotle its theoretic basis in this, ~~that the external movements of rhythmical sound bear a close resemblance to the movements of the soul~~. Each

which there is no modern parallel. The nearest analogue may be found in the use of modulation from a major to a minor key, or the reverse. But the changes of genus and "colour" at the disposal of an ancient musician must have been acoustically more striking, and must have come nearer to reproducing, in an idealised form, the tones and inflexions of the speaking voice. The tendency of music that is based upon harmony is to treat the voice as one of a number of instruments, and accordingly to curtail the use of it as the great source of dramatic and emotional effect. The consequence is twofold. On the one hand we lose sight of the direct influence exerted by sound of certain degrees of pitch on the human sensibility, and thus ultimately on character. On the other hand, the music becomes an independent creation. It may still be a vehicle of the deepest feeling; but it no longer seeks the aid of language, or reaches its aim through the channels by which language influences the mind of man.'

<sup>1</sup> *Probl.* xix. 27. 919 b 26, καὶ γὰρ ἐὰν ᾗ ἄνευ λόγου μέλος, ὁμῶς ἔχει ἥθος.

single note is felt as an inward agitation. The regular succession of musical sounds, governed by the laws of melody and rhythm, are allied to those *πράξεις* or outward activities which are the expression of a mental state.<sup>1</sup>

This power which belongs in an eminent degree to the sense of hearing is but feebly exhibited by the other senses. Taste and touch do not directly reflect moral qualities; sight, but little, for form and colour are 'rather signs of moral qualities' than actual imitations of them.<sup>2</sup> This passage of

<sup>1</sup> In *Probl.* xix. 29. 920 a 3, the question is asked διὰ τί οἱ ῥυθμοὶ καὶ τὰ μέλη φωνῇ οὔσα ἤθεσιν εἰσὶν ὡς περ καὶ αἱ πράξεις; ἡ δὲ ἀπάντησις ἡ ὅτι κινήσεις εἰσὶν ὡς περ καὶ αἱ πράξεις; ἡ δὲ ἀπάντησις ἡ μὲν ἐνέργεια ἡθικὴν καὶ ποιεῖ ἥθος, οἱ δὲ χυμοὶ καὶ τὰ χρώματα οὐ ποιοῦσιν ὁμοίως. Again in *Probl.* xix. 27. 919 b 26, the similar question διὰ τί τὸ ἀκουστὸν μόνον ἥθος ἔχει τῶν αἰσθητῶν; is put, and again the answer is ἡ ὅτι κίνησιν ἔχει μόνον οὐχ ἦν ὁ ψόφος ἡμᾶς κινεῖ; . . . ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐπομένης τῷ τοιούτῳ ψόφῳ αἰσθανόμεθα κινήσεως. It is added αἱ δὲ κινήσεις αὐταὶ πρακτικαὶ εἰσὶν, αἱ δὲ πράξεις ἥθους σημασία ἐστίν. A distinction is further drawn between the κινήσεις produced by sight and by hearing, but the precise meaning is not beyond dispute and need not detain us here.

The classification of melodies into ἡθικά, ἐνθουσιαστικά, πρακτικά (*Pol.* v. (viii.) 7. 1341 b 33), corresponds, it may be observed, with the three objects of imitative art ἡθῆ, πάθη, πράξεις.

<sup>2</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1340 a 28, συμβέβηκε δὲ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἐν μὲν τοῖς ἄλλοις μηδὲν ὑπάρχειν ὁμοίωμα τοῖς ἡθεσιν, οἷον ἐν τοῖς ἀπτοῖς καὶ τοῖς γευστοῖς, ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς ὁρατοῖς ἡρέμα· σχήματα γάρ ἐστι τοιαῦτα, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ μικρόν, . . . ἔτι δὲ οὐκ ἐστὶ ταῦτα ὁμοιώματα τῶν ἡθῶν, ἀλλὰ σημεία μᾶλλον τὰ γινόμενα σχήματα καὶ χρώματα τῶν ἡθῶν. The two passages just quoted from the *Problems* go farther and declare that sound alone carries with it

the *Politics* would seem to imply that painting and sculpture directly render little more than the outward and physical features of an object, and that they convey moral and spiritual facts almost wholly by signs or symbols. Here, it might be thought, we are introduced to a type of art foreign to the mind of Greece, an art in which the inner qualities are shadowed forth in outward forms, with which they are conventionally associated, but which suggest no obvious and immediate resemblance.

But the phrase here used, like many of Aristotle's *obiter dicta*, must be taken with considerable latitude and in conjunction with other passages. Some emphasis, too, must be laid on the admission that form and colour do, in however slight a degree, reflect the moral character, and on the qualifying 'rather' prefixed to the statement that they are 'signs of moral qualities.' They are indeed less perfect manifestations of these qualities than music, whose rhythmical and ordered movements have a special affinity with the nature of the soul, and reproduce with most directness the moral life, which is itself an activity, a movement.<sup>1</sup> Still facial

any immediate suggestion of moral qualities; sight, taste, and smell are expressly excluded. This is perhaps an exaggeration of the proper Aristotelian view.

<sup>1</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1340 b 17, καὶ τις εἶκοι συγγένεια ταῖς ἀρμονίαις καὶ τοῖς ῥυθμοῖς εἶναι, where the sense, as the context shows, is that harmonies and rhythms have a certain affinity with the soul. Hence, Aristotle proceeds, some have wrongly inferred



expression, gestures, attitudes, are a dialect which nature herself has taught, and which needs no skilled interpreter to expound. They are in the truest sense a natural, not an artificial medium of expression, and convey their meaning by the force of immediate suggestion and without a conscious process of inference. If symbols they may be called, they are not conventional symbols, but living signs through which the outward frame follows and reflects the movements of the spirit; they are a visible token of the inner unity of body and soul.

The reading of character by gesture and facial expression, as explained by the Aristotelian school, rests on an assumed harmony not in the case of hearing only but of other organs of sense also, between the movements within and those without.<sup>1</sup> The comparisons, moreover, elsewhere made between painting and poetry as expressive of character cease to be relevant if we suppose that form and colour have no natural, as distinct from a conventional, significance in rendering the phenomena of mind.

that the soul itself is a harmony. Cf. *Probl.* xix. 38. 920 b 33, *ῥυθμῷ δὲ χαίρομεν διὰ τὸ γινώριμον καὶ τεταγμένον ἀριθμὸν ἔχειν, καὶ κινεῖν ἡμᾶς τεταγμένως· οἰκειότερα γὰρ ἢ τεταγμένη κίνησις φύσει τῆς ἀτάκτου, ὥστε καὶ κατὰ φύσιν μᾶλλον.* Plato *Tim.* 47 D, ἡ δὲ ἁρμονία ξυγγενεῖς ἔχουσα φορὰς ταῖς ἐν ἡμῖν τῆς ψυχῆς περιόδοις.

<sup>1</sup> *Physiognom.* i. 2. 806 a 28, *ἐκ τε γὰρ τῶν κινήσεων φυσιογνωμονούσι, καὶ ἐκ τῶν σχημάτων, καὶ ἐκ τῶν χρωμάτων, καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἡθῶν τῶν ἐπὶ τοῦ προσώπου ἐμφαινόμενων.* 806 b 28, *τὰ δὲ σχήματα καὶ τὰ παθήματα τὰ ἐπιφαινόμενα ἐπὶ τῶν προσώπων κατὰ τὰς ὁμοιότητας λαμβάνεται τῷ πάθει.*

Aristotle no doubt holds that sound is unequalled in its power of direct expression, but he does not deny that colour and form too have a similar capacity though in an inferior degree. The instinctive movements of the limbs, the changes of colour produced on the surface of the body, are something more than arbitrary symbols; they imply that the body is of itself responsive to the animating soul, which leaves its trace on the visible organism.

Painting and sculpture working through an inert material cannot indeed reproduce the life of the soul in all its variety and successive manifestations. In their frozen and arrested movement they fix eternally the feeling they portray. A single typical moment is seized and becomes representative of all that precedes or follows. Still shape and line and colour even here retain something of their significance, they are in their own degree a natural image of the mind; and their meaning is helped out by symmetry, which in the arts of repose answers to rhythm, the chief vehicle of expression in the arts of movement. Aristotle does not himself notice the analogy between dancing and sculpture, which is brought out by later writers, but he would have perfectly apprehended the feeling which suggested the saying, 'The statues of the classic artists are the relics of ancient dancing.'<sup>1</sup> The corres-

<sup>1</sup> Athen. xiv. 26 p. 629, ἔστι δὲ καὶ τὰ τῶν ἀρχαίων δημιουργῶν ἀγάλματα τῆς παλαιᾶς ὀρχήσεως λείψανα.

pondence lies in the common element of rhythmic form. This, which was the soul of Greek music and Greek dancing, would not on Aristotle's general principles lose all its expressive power when transferred to the material of the plastic arts, modified though it may be in the transference.

dancing

Even dancing, we read in the *Poetics*,<sup>1</sup> imitates character, emotion, action. The expressive power of dancing, admitted by Aristotle and by all Greek tradition, receives its most instructive commentary in Lucian's pamphlet on the subject, which, when due allowance is made for exaggeration and the playful gravity so characteristic of the writer, is still inspired by an old Greek sentiment. Rhetoricians and musicians had already written treatises on the art, and Lucian in handling the same theme imitates their semi-philosophic manner. Dancing is placed in the front rank of the fine arts, and all the sciences are made contributory to it. The dancer must have a fine genius, a critical judgment of poetry, a ready and comprehensive memory; like Homer's Calchas he must know the past, the present, and the future. Above all he needs to have mastered all mythology from chaos and the origin of the universe down to Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, and to be able to reproduce the legends in their spirit and their details. He must avoid the 'terrible solecisms' of some ignorant performers. Like the orator he

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* i. 5.

should aim at being always perspicuous; he must be understood though he is dumb and heard though he says nothing. Dancing is not inferior to tragedy itself in expressive capacity; it is descriptive of every shade of character and emotion. Moreover it harmonises the soul of the spectator, trains the moral sympathies, and acts as a curative and quieting influence on the passions.

Poetry unlike the other arts produces its effects (except such as depend on metre) through symbols alone. It cannot directly present form and colour to the eye; it can only employ words to call up images of the objects to be represented; nor need these words be audible; they may be merely written symbols. The sign too and the thing signified are not here so linked together by obvious suggestion that their meaning is at once and everywhere apprehended; they vary with race and country, they cannot claim to be a universal language. Yet poetry, though it makes use of symbols which have to be interpreted by the mind, is no exception to Aristotle's principle that fine art is not a body of symbols. The image it presents is not one which through artificial means or remote association reminds us of a reality already known. Though signs are the medium of expression, the representation is not purely symbolical; for the signs are those significant words which in life are the natural and familiar medium by which thought

and feeling are revealed. The world which poetry creates is not explicitly stated by Aristotle to be a likeness or *ὁμοίωμα* of an original, but this is implied all through the *Poetics*. The original which it reflects is human action and character in all their diverse modes of manifestation; no other art has equal range of subject matter, nor can present so complete and satisfying an image of its original.

rama

In the drama the poetic imitation of life attains its perfect form; but it is here also that the idea of imitation in its more rudimentary sense is at once apparent; speech has its counterpart in speech, and, if the play is put on the stage, action is rendered by action. Indeed the term imitation, as popularly applied to poetry, was probably suggested to the Greeks by those dramatic forms of poetry in which acting or recitation produced an impression allied to that of mimicry.

Poetry, music, and dancing constitute in Aristotle a group by themselves, their common element being imitation by means of rhythm—rhythm which admits of being applied to words, sounds, and the movements of the body.<sup>1</sup> The history of these arts bears out the views we find expressed in Greek writers upon the theory of music; it is a witness to the primitive unity of music and poetry, and to the close alliance of the two with dancing.

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* i. 2-5. On the unity of this group cf. Prickard, *Aristotle on the Art of Poetry* (Macmillan 1891), pp. 19-21.

Together they form a natural triad, and illustrate a characteristic of the ancient world to retain as indivisible wholes branches of art or science which the separative spirit of modern thought has broken up into their elements. The intimate fusion of the three arts afterwards known as the 'musical' arts—or rather we should perhaps say, the alliance of music and dancing under the supremacy of poetry—was exhibited even in the person of the artist. The office of the poet as teacher of the chorus demanded a practical knowledge of all that passed under the term 'dancing,' including steps, gestures, attitudes, and the varied resources of rhythmical movement. Aeschylus, we are told,<sup>1</sup> 'was the inventor of many orchestric attitudes,' and it is added that the ancient poets were called orchestric, not only because they trained their choruses, but also because they taught choral dances outside the théâtre to such as wished to learn them. 'So wise and honourable a thing,' says Athenaeus,<sup>2</sup> 'was dancing that Pindar calls Apollo the dancer,' and he quotes the words: 'Ορχήστ', ἀγλαίας ἀνάσσων, εὐρυφάρετρ' Ἀπολλων.

Improvements in the technique of music or in the construction of instruments are associated with many names well known in the history of poetry. The poet, lyric or dramatic, composed the accompaniment as well as wrote the verses; and it was

<sup>1</sup> Athenaeus i. 40.<sup>2</sup> xiv. 26.

made a reproach against Euripides, who was the first to deviate from the established usage, that he sought the aid of Iophon, son of Sophocles, in the musical setting of his dramas. The very word *ποιητής* 'poet' in classical times often implies the twofold character of poet and musician, and in later writers is sometimes used, like our 'composer,' in a strictly limited reference to music.

Aristotle does full justice to the force of rhythmic form and movement in the arts of music and dancing. The instinctive love of melody and rhythm is, again, one of the two causes to which he traces the origin of poetry,<sup>1</sup> but he lays little stress on this element

<sup>1</sup> I take the two *αἰτίαι φυσικαί* (*Poet.* iv. 1) of poetry to be (1) the instinct of *μίμησις*, regarded as a primitive mode of learning (iv. 2-5), and (2) the instinct for *ἁρμονία* and *ῥυθμός* (iv. 6). The whole passage gains much by this interpretation. The objection to it is the abruptness with which the instinct for harmony and rhythm is introduced in § 6, so as to suggest a doubt whether there is not after § 5 a lacuna in the text, in which harmony and rhythm were mentioned as the second cause. Mr. R. P. Hardie (in *Mind*, vol. iv. No. 15) would account for the abruptness of § 6 in another way: 'I would suggest that the transition to the second *αἰτία* is to be found in the preceding sentence, which is to the effect that when an object imitated has not been seen before, so that the pleasure of recognition cannot be present, there may still be pleasure, which "will be due, not to the imitation as such, but to the execution (*ἀπεργασία*), the colouring (*χρoαία*), or some such cause." Here plainly two kinds of pleasure which are necessarily independent are referred to, and there is no difficulty in supposing *ἀπεργασία* and *χρoαία* to be intended by Aristotle to correspond roughly in *γραφικὴ* to *ἁρμονία* and *ῥυθμός* in *ποιητικὴ*.'

The ordinary interpretation makes the two *αἰτίαι* to be the

in estimating the finished products of the poetic art. In the *Rhetoric*<sup>1</sup> he observes that if a sentence has metre it will be poetry; but this is said in a popular way. It was doubtless the received opinion,<sup>2</sup> but it is one which he twice combats in the *Poetics*, insisting that it is not metrical form that makes a poem.<sup>3</sup> In one of these passages (ch. i. 7-9) he goes a step farther and presents what

instinct of imitation, and the pleasure derived from imitation. This interpretation is open to the objection that it gives us not two independent αἰτίαι but two tendencies, both of which are referred to the same αἰτία,—namely, the natural love of knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> *Rhet.* iii. 8. 1408 b 30, διδὲ ῥυθμὸν δεῖ ἔχειν τὸν λόγον, μέτρον δὲ μή· ποίημα γὰρ ἔσται.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Plato *Phaedr.* 258 E, ἐν μέτρῳ ὡς ποιητής, ἣ ἄνευ μέτρου ὡς ἰδιώτης; and *Repub.* x. 601 B on the κήλησις of melody and rhythm: stripped of these adornments poetical compositions are like faces from which the bloom of youth is gone. *Gorg.* 502 C, εἴ τις περιέλοιτο τῆς ποιήσεως πάσης τό τε μέλος καὶ τὸν ῥυθμὸν καὶ τὸ μέτρον, ἄλλο τι ἢ λόγοι γίγνονται τὸ λειπόμενον;

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* i. 6-9; ix. 2, cf. 9. See also the quotation from Aristotle preserved in Athenaeus xi. 112 (where, however, the text as it stands is hardly sound), 'Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ ἐν τῷ περὶ ποιητῶν οὕτως γράφει "οὐκοῦν οὐδὲ ἐμμέτρους (?) τοὺς καλουμένους Σώφρονος μίμους μὴ φῶμεν εἶναι λόγους καὶ μιμήσεις ἢ τοὺς Ἀλεξαμένου τοῦ Τηίου τοὺς πρώτους (? πρότερον) γραφέντας τῶν Σωκρατικῶν διαλόγων;" 'Are we therefore to deny that the mimes of Sophron' (whose very name shows that they are imitative or mimetic), 'though in no way metrical,—or again the dialogues of Alexamenus of Teos, the first (?) Socratic dialogues that were written,—are prose and at the same time imitations (and hence, poetic compositions)?' On this passage see Bernays, *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Aristotelische Theorie des Drama*, p. 83. Cf. Diog. Laert. iii. 37, φησὶ δ' Ἀριστοτέλης τὴν τῶν λόγων ἰδέαν αὐτοῦ (Πλάτωνος) μεταξὺ ποιήματος εἶναι καὶ περὶ λόγου.



X appears to have been at the time an original view. Poetry, he explains, is a form of artistic *μίμησις*, and its essence lies rather in the 'imitation' of the idea than in the mere versification. Within the field of literature he recalls actual examples of such artistic 'imitation,' even in prose writings, and notes the want of a common term which would embrace every imaginative delineation of life that employs language as its medium of expression. In illustration of his point he mentions different kinds of literary composition, which have not hitherto been brought under a single distinctive designation, — (1) the mimes of Sophron and Xenarchus and the dialogues of Plato, all of them prose compositions of a dramatic or semi-dramatic character: (2) verse compositions, whether written in a single metre or in heterogeneous metres. The obvious suggestion of the passage is that the meaning of the word 'poet' should be widened so as to include any writer, either in prose or verse, whose work is an 'imitation' within the aesthetic meaning of the term.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The general sense of the passage (*Poet.* i. 6–9) is clear, though the text offers difficulties in detail. In § 6 Ueberweg's deletion of *ἐποποιία* and Bernays' admirable conjecture *ἀνώνυμος* are both confirmed by the Arabic version and may be accepted without hesitation. Again in § 6 *μόνον τοῖς λόγοις* I understand to mean 'by language alone' (i.e. without music), *ψιλοῖς* 'without metre' (as e.g. *Rhet.* iii. 2. 1404 b 14 where *ἐν δὲ τοῖς ψιλοῖς λόγοις* is opposed to *ἐπὶ τῶν μέτρων*), *ψιλός* as usual implying the absence of some accompaniment or adjunct which is suggested by the

The general question whether metre is necessary for poetical expression has been raised by many modern critics and poets, and has sometimes been answered in the negative, as by Sidney, Shelley, context. The order of words τοῖς λόγοις ψιλοῖς instead of τοῖς ψιλοῖς λόγοις is due to the pause in the sense at μόνον τοῖς λόγοις, at which point ψιλοῖς comes in with a predicative force as if the whole phrase were to be ψιλοῖς ἢ ἐμμέτροις: τοῖς μέτροις, however, is substituted for ἐμμέτροις.

In § 9 ὁμοίως δὲ κἂν εἴ τις κ.τ.λ. I accept the reading of the apographa καὶ τοῦτον (καὶ Δ<sup>c</sup>) ποιητὴν προσαγορευτέον: 'and the same principle will apply even if a person mixed all his metres (and could not, therefore, be called a —ποιός of a certain metre); we must bring him too under our general term poet; ' i.e. by shifting the point of view, and fixing our mind on the μίμησις not on the metrical form, we bring in another writer whom strictly we should exclude, if we made the title to the name ποιητής to be the construction of a certain sort of metre.

As I read the whole passage there is a transition from the negative to the positive form of expression. In §§ 6 and 7 the form is negative. 'The art . . . is at present without a name. There is no common term we can apply to artistic "imitation" in prose, in metre of a single kind——' the proper continuation of which would have been, 'and in mixed metres.' But in the course of §§ 7–8 the positive idea has now emerged that it is μίμησις not verse-writing which makes the ποιητής, and accordingly § 9 is cast in a new mould, as if the whole had run thus, 'we ought to give the comprehensive name of ποιητής to artistic imitators whether in prose, or metre of a single kind, or mixed metres.' The parenthetic remark of § 8 διὸ τὸν μὲν ποιητὴν δίκαιον καλεῖν κ.τ.λ. may through its positive form have had some influence in determining the form of ὁμοίως δὲ . . . προσαγορευτέον.

With this interpretation we avoid the extreme harshness of supplying with Vahlen the remote words οὐδὲν ἂν ἔχοιμεν ὀνομάσαι κοινόν as the apodosis to ὁμοίως δὲ κἂν εἴ τις—ποιοῖτο, with καὶ ποιητὴν προσαγορευτέον tacked on as a second apodosis,—the sense too being somewhat forced. We are also relieved from

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Wordsworth.<sup>1</sup> It is, however, worth observing that from Aristotle's point of view, which was mainly one of observation, the question to be determined was rather as to the vehicle or medium

the alternative necessity of assuming, with Susemihl, a diallocation in the general order of the clauses (see Crit. Notes) and bracketing certain phrases. The correction *καίτοι ποιητὴν προσαγορευτέον* (Rassow and Zeller) hardly brings out the connexion of thought.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie*: 'The greatest part of poets have apparelled their poetical inventions in that numerous kind of writing which is called verse. Indeed but apparelled, verse being but an ornament and no cause to poetry, since there have been many most excellent poets that never versified, and now swarm many versifiers that need never answer to the name of poets. For Xenophon, who did imitate so excellently as to give us *effigiem iusti imperii*—the portraiture of a just empire under the name of Cyrus (as Cicero saith of him)—made therein an absolute heroical poem.'

And again: 'One may be a poet without versing, and a versifier without poetry.'

Cervantes, *Don Quixote*: 'An epic may also be as well written in prose as in verse.'

Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*: 'Yet it is by no means essential that a poet should accommodate his language to this traditional form, so that the harmony, which is its spirit, be observed. The practice is indeed convenient and popular, and to be preferred, especially in such composition as includes much action: but every great poet must inevitably innovate upon the example of his predecessors in the exact structure of his peculiar versification. The distinction between poets and prose writers is a vulgar error. . . . Plato was essentially a poet—the truth and splendour of his imagery, and the melody of his language are the most intense that it is possible to conceive. . . . Lord Bacon was a poet. His language has a sweet and majestic rhythm, which satisfies the sense, no less than the almost superhuman wisdom of his philosophy satisfies the intellect.'

Wordsworth in his *Preface* also enforces the doctrine that metre is not essential to poetry.

of literary *μίμησις*; and so far as the *μίμησις* doctrine is concerned, it is undeniable that some kinds of imaginative subject matter are better expressed in prose, some in verse, and that Aristotle, who had before him experimental examples of writings poetic in spirit, but not metrical in form, had sufficient grounds for advocating an extension of meaning for the term *ποιητής*. But as regards the *Art* of Poetry, his reasoning does not lead us to conclude that he would have reckoned the authors of prose dialogues or romances among poets strictly so called. As Mr. Courthope truly says,<sup>1</sup> 'he does not attempt to prove that metre is not a necessary accompaniment of the higher conceptions of poetry,' and he, 'therefore, cannot be ranged with those who support that extreme opinion.'

Still there would appear to be some want of *metre* firmness in the position he takes up as to the place and importance of metre. In his definition of tragedy (ch. vi. 2) 'embellished language' (*ἡδυσμένος λόγος*) is included among the constituent elements of tragedy; and the phrase is then explained to mean language that has the twofold charm of metre (which is a branch of rhythm) and of melody. But these elements are placed in a subordinate rank and are hardly treated as essentials.

<sup>1</sup> *Life in Poetry: Poetical Expression*, *Nineteenth Century*, February 1897, p. 274. The whole lecture well deserves reading.

They are in this respect not unlike scenery or spectacular effect (*ὄψις*), which, though deduced by Aristotle from the definition, is not explicitly mentioned in it. The essence of the poetry is the 'imitation'; the melody and the verse are the 'seasoning'<sup>1</sup> of the language. They hold a place, as Teichmüller observes,<sup>2</sup> similar to that which 'external goods' occupy in the Aristotelian definition of happiness. Without them a tragedy may fulfil its function, but would lack its perfect charm and fail in producing its full effect of pleasurable emotion.

Aristotle, highly as he rates the aesthetic capacity of the sense of hearing in his treatment of music, says nothing to show that he values at its proper worth the power of rhythmical sound as a factor in poetry; and this is the more striking in a Greek, whose enjoyment of poetry came through the ear rather than the eye, and for whom poetry was so largely associated with music. After all, there can hardly be a greater difference between two ways of saying the same thing than that one

<sup>1</sup> They are ἡδύσματα: *Poet.* vi. 19, ἡ μελοποιία μέγιστον τῶν ἡδυσμάτων. Cf. *Rhet.* iii. 3. 1406 a 18 (of Alcidas' use of epithets), οὐ γὰρ ἡδύσματι χρῆται ἀλλ' ὡς ἐδέσματι τοῖς ἐπιθέτοις, —they are not the sauce but the dish itself. *Plato Rep.* x. 607 A, εἰ δὲ τὴν ἡδυσμένην Μοῦσαν παραδέξει ἐν μέλεσιν ἢ ἔπεσιν. . . . *Plut. Symp. Qu.* vii. 8. 4, τὸ μέλος καὶ ὁ ῥυθμὸς ὥσπερ ὄψον ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ.

<sup>2</sup> *Aristotelische Forschungen*, ii. 364.


is said in verse, the other in prose. There are some lyrics which have lived and will always live by their musical charm, and by a strange magic that lies in the setting of the words. We need not agree with a certain modern school who would empty all poetry of poetical thought and etherealise it till it melts into a strain of music; who sing to us we hardly know of what, but in such a way that the echoes of the real world, its men and women, its actual stir and conflict, are faint and hardly to be discerned. The poetry, we are told, resides not in the ideas conveyed, not in the blending of soul and sense, but in the sound itself, in the cadence of the verse.

Yet, false as this view may be, it is not perhaps more false than that other which wholly ignores the effect of musical sound and looks only to the thought that is conveyed. Aristotle comes perilously near this doctrine, and was saved from it, we may conjecture—if indeed he was saved—only by an instinctive reluctance to bid defiance to the traditional sentiment of Greece.

His omission of architecture from the list of the fine arts may also cause surprise to modern readers; for here, as in sculpture, the artistic greatness of Greece stands undisputed. In this, however, he is merely following the usage of his countrymen who reckoned architecture among the useful arts. It was linked to the practical world.

It sprang out of the needs of civic and religious life, and the greatest triumphs of the art were connected with public faith and worship. To a Greek the temple, which was the culmination of architectural skill, was the house of the god, the abode of his image, a visible pledge of his protecting presence. At the same time,—and this was the decisive point—architecture had not the ‘imitative’ quality which was regarded as essential to fine art. Modern writers may tell us that its forms owe their origin to the direct suggestions of the physical world—of natural caverns or forest arches—and in the groined roof they may trace a marked resemblance to an avenue of interlacing trees. Such resemblances, however, are much fainter in Greek than in Gothic architecture; apart from which the argument from origin would here be as much out of place, as it would be to maintain, in relation to music, that the reason why people now enjoy Beethoven is, that their earliest ancestors of arboreal habits found musical notes to be a telling adjunct to love-making.

Be the origin of architecture what it may, it is certain that the Greeks did not find its primitive type and model in the outward universe. A building as an organic whole did not call up any image of a world outside itself, though the method of architecture does remind Aristotle of the structural method of nature. Even if architecture



had seemed to him to reproduce the appearances of the physical universe, it would not have satisfied his idea of artistic imitation; for all the arts imitate human life in some of its manifestations, and imitate material objects only so far as these serve to interpret spiritual and mental processes. The decorative element in Greek architecture is alone 'imitative' in the Aristotelian sense, being indeed but a form of sculpture; but sculpture does not constitute the building, nor is it, as in Gothic architecture, an organic part of the whole. The metopes in a Greek temple are, as it were, a setting for a picture, a frame into which sculptural representations may be fitted, but the frame is not always filled in. The temple itself, though constructed according to the laws of the beautiful, though realising, as we might say, the idea of the beautiful, yet is not 'imitative'; it does not, according to Greek notions, rank as fine art.

From the course of the foregoing argument we gather that a work of art is an image of the impressions or 'phantasy pictures' made by an independent reality upon the mind of the artist, the reality thus reflected being the facts of human life and human nature. To this we must make one addition, which contains the central thought of Aristotle's doctrine. *Imitative art in its highest form, namely poetry, is an expression of the*



## POETRY AND FINE ART

*universal element in human life.*<sup>1</sup> If we may expand Aristotle's idea in the light of his own system,—fine art eliminates what is transient and particular and reveals the permanent and essential features of the original. It discovers the 'form' (*εἶδος*) towards which an object tends, the result which nature strives to attain, but rarely or never can attain. Beneath the individual it finds the universal. It passes beyond the bare reality given by nature, and expresses a purified form of reality disengaged from accident, and freed from conditions which thwart its development. The real and the ideal from this point of view are not opposites, as they are sometimes conceived to be. The ideal is the real, but rid of contradictions, unfolding itself according to the laws of its own being, apart from alien influences and the disturbances of chance.

We can now see the force of the phrase *τὸ βέλτιον*, as applied in the *Poetics*<sup>2</sup> to the creations of poetry and art. It is identical in meaning with the *οἷα εἶναι δεῖ* of ch. xxv. § 1, and the *οἷους δεῖ* (? *εἶναι*)<sup>3</sup> of § 6. The 'better' and the 'ought to be' are not to be taken in the moral, but in the aesthetic sense. The expression 'the better' is, indeed, almost a technical one in Aristotle's general philosophy of nature, and its meaning and associations in that connexion throw light on the

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ix. 3.

<sup>2</sup> xxv. 17, cf. 7.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 361.

sense it bears when transferred to the sphere of Art. Aristotle distinguishes the workings of inorganic and organic nature. In the former case, the governing law is the law of necessity: in the latter, it is purpose or design; which purpose, again, is identified with 'the better'<sup>1</sup> or 'the best.'<sup>2</sup> Nature, often baffled in her intentions,<sup>3</sup> thwarted by unfavourable matter or by human agency, yet tends towards the desirable end. She can often enlist even the blind force of necessity as her ally, giving a new direction to its results.<sup>4</sup> Wherever organic processes are in operation, order

<sup>1</sup> *De Gen. Anim.* i. 4. 717 a 15, πᾶν ἡ φύσις ἡ διὰ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον ποιεῖ ἢ διὰ τὸ βέλτιον, the distinction being that between φύσις ἐξ ἀνάγκης ποιούσα, the inorganic processes of nature, and φύσις ἐνεκά του ποιούσα, organic processes. So ἐξ ἀνάγκης is opposed in *de Gen. Anim.* iii. 1. 731 b 21 to διὰ τὸ βέλτιον καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν τὴν ἐνεκά τινος: in *de Gen. Anim.* iii. 4. 755 a 22, το χάριν τοῦ βελτίονος: in *de Part. Anim.* iv. 11. 692 a 3, το τοῦ βελτίονος ἐνεκα. For τὸ βέλτιον as the aim of Nature when working organically cf. *de Gen. et Corr.* ii. 10. 336 b 27, ἐν ᾧ πᾶσιν αἰεὶ τοῦ βελτίονος ὀρέγεσθαι φαμεν τὴν φύσιν. *Phya.* viii. 7. 260 b 22, τὸ δὲ βέλτιον αἰεὶ ὑπολαμβάνομεν ἐν τῇ φύσει ὑπάρχειν, ἂν ᾗ δυνατόν: viii. 6. 259 a 10, ἐν γὰρ τοῖς φύσει δεῖ τὸ πεπερασμένον καὶ τὸ βέλτιον, ἂν ἐνδέχεται, ὑπάρχειν μᾶλλον.

<sup>2</sup> *De Ingr. Anim.* 8. 708 a 9, τὴν φύσιν μὴ θέν ποιεῖν μάτην, ἀλλὰ πάντα πρὸς τὸ ἄριστον ἀποβλέπουσαν ἐκάστῃ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων: 11, ἡ φύσις οὐδὲν δημιουργεῖ μάτην . . . ἀλλὰ πάντα πρὸς τὸ βέλτιστον ἐκ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων. So *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> *Pol.* i. 6. 1255 b 2, ἡ δὲ φύσις βούλεται μὲν τοῦτο ποιεῖν, πολλάκις μὲντοι οὐ δύναται.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *de Gen. Anim.* ii. 6. 744 b 16, ὥσπερ γὰρ οἰκονόμος ἀγαθός, καὶ ἡ φύσις οὐθὲν ἀποβάλλειν εἴωθεν ἐξ ὧν ἔστι ποιησαί τι χρηστόν.

and proportion are in varying degrees apparent. The general movement of organic life is part of a progress to the 'better,' the several parts co-operating for the good of the whole. The artist in his mimic world carries forward this movement to a more perfect completion. The creations of his art are framed on those ideal lines that nature has drawn — her intimations, her guidance are what he follows. He too aims at something better than the actual. He produces a new thing, not the actual thing of experience, not a copy of reality, but a *βέλτιον*, or higher reality—for the ideal type must surpass the actual';<sup>1</sup> the ideal is 'better' than the real.

Art, therefore, in imitating the universal imitates the ideal; and we can now describe *a work of art as an idealised representation of human life—of character, emotion, action—under forms manifest to sense.*

'Imitation,' in the sense in which Aristotle applies the word to poetry, is thus seen to be equivalent to 'producing' or 'creating according to a true idea,' which forms part of the definition of art in general.<sup>2</sup> The 'true idea' for fine art is derived from the *εἶδος*, the general concept which the intellect spontaneously abstracts from

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxv. 17, ἀλλὰ βέλτιον· τὸ γὰρ παράδειγμα δεῖ ὑπερέχειν. See also p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Eth. Nic.* vi. 4. 1140 a 10, ἕξιν μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς


the details of sense. There is an ideal form which is present in each individual phenomenon but imperfectly manifested. This form impresses itself as a sensuous appearance on the mind of the artist; he seeks to give it a more complete expression, to bring to light the ideal which is only half revealed in the world of reality. His distinctive work as an artist consists in stamping the given material with the impress of the form which is universal. The process is not simply that which is described by Socrates in the conversation he is reported to have held in the studio of Parrhasius, by which the artist, who is no servile copyist, brings together many elements of beauty which are dispersed in nature.<sup>1</sup> It is not enough to select, combine, embellish,—to add here and to retrench there. The elements must be harmonised into an ideal unity of type.

'Imitation,' so understood, is a creative act. It is the expression of the concrete thing under an image which answers to its true idea. To seize the universal, and to reproduce it in simple and sensuous form is not to reflect a

<sup>1</sup> Xen. Mem. iii. 10. Cf. Arist. Pol. iii. 11. 1281 b 10, τούτῳ διαφέρουσιν οἱ σπουδαῖοι τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἕκαστοι τῶν πολλῶν, ὥσπερ καὶ τῶν μὴ καλῶν τοὺς καλοὺς φασὶ καὶ τὰ γεγραμμένα διὰ τέχνης τῶν ἀληθινῶν, τῷ συνῆχθαι τὰ διεσπαρμένα χωρὶς εἰς ἓν, ἐπεὶ κεχωρισμένων γε κάλλιον ἔχειν τοῦ γεγραμμένου τουδὶ μὲν τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν ἑτέρου δέ τινος ἕτερον μόριον.

reality already familiar through sense perceptions; rather it is a rivalry of nature, a completion of her unfulfilled purposes, a correction of her failures.

If, however, the 'imitation' which is the principle of fine art ultimately resolves itself into an effort to complete in some sense the work of nature, how, then, it may be asked, does fine art, after all, differ from useful art? We have seen that the character of the useful arts is to co-operate with nature, to complete the designs which she has been unable to carry out. Does not Aristotle's distinction, then, between the two forms of art disappear? To the question thus raised Aristotle offers no direct answer; nor perhaps did he put it to himself in this form. But if we follow out his thought, his reply would appear to be something of this kind. [Nature is a living and creative energy, which by a sort of instinctive reason works in every individual object towards a specific end. In some domains the end is more clearly visible than in others; the higher we carry our observation in the scale of existence the more certainly can the end be discerned. Everywhere, however, there is a ceaseless and upward progress, an unfolding of new life in inexhaustible variety. Each individual thing has an ideal form towards which it tends, and in the realisation of this form, which is one with the essence (*οὐσία*) of the



object, its end is attained.<sup>1</sup> Nature is an artist who is capable indeed of mistakes, but by slow advances and through many failures realises her own idea.<sup>2</sup> Her organising and plastic power displays itself in the manifest purpose which governs her movements. Some of the humbler members of her kingdom may appear mean if taken singly and judged by the impression they make upon the senses. Their true beauty and significance are visible to the eye of reason, which looks not to the material elements or to the isolated parts but to the structure of the whole.<sup>3</sup> In her structural

<sup>1</sup> The τέλος of an object is τὸ τέλος τῆς γενέσεως or κινήσεως, the term of the process of the movement. The true οὐσία or φύσις of a thing is found in the attainment of its τέλος,—that which the thing has become when the process of development is completed from the matter (ὑλη) or mere potential existence (δύναμις) to form (εἶδος) or actuality (ἐντελέχεια). *Phys.* ii. 2. 194 a 28, ἡ δὲ φύσις τέλος καὶ οὐ ἔνεκα· ὧν γὰρ συνεχοῦς τῆς κινήσεως οὕσης ἔστι τι τέλος τῆς κινήσεως, τοῦτο ἔσχατον καὶ οὐ ἔνεκα. Cf. *Pol.* i. 2. 1252 b 32. *Metaph.* iv. 4. 1015 a 10, (φύσις) . . . καὶ τὸ εἶδος καὶ ἡ οὐσία· τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ τὸ τέλος τῆς γενέσεως. Hence (of the development of tragedy) *Poet.* iv. 12, πολλὰς μεταβολὰς μεταβαλοῦσα ἡ τραγῳδία ἐπαύσατο, ἐπεὶ ἔσχε τὴν αὐτῆς φύσιν.

<sup>2</sup> *Phys.* ii. 8. 199 a 17 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *de Part. Anim.* i. 5. 645 a 4 sqq., 'Having already treated of the celestial world, as far as our conjectures could reach, we proceed to treat of animals, without omitting, to the best of our ability, any member of the kingdom, however ignoble. For if some have no graces to charm the sense (πρὸς τὴν αἰσθησιν), yet even these, by disclosing to intellectual perception the artistic spirit that designed them, give immense pleasure to all who can trace links of causation and are inclined to philosophy (κατὰ τὴν

faculty lies nature's perfection. With her *the* attainment of the end 'holds the place of *the* beautiful.'<sup>1</sup>

Now, art in its widest sense starts from *a* mental conception of the ideal as thus determined.

Useful art, employing nature's own machinery *y* aids her in her effort to realise the ideal in *the*

world around us, so far as man's practical needs *are*

are served by furthering this purpose. Fine art *sets* practical needs aside; it does not seek to

θεωρίαν ὅμως ἢ δημιουργήσασα φύσις ἀμηχάνους ἡδονὰς παρέχε-  
τοῖς δυναμένοις τὰς αἰτίας γνωρίζειν καὶ φύσει φιλοσόφοις  
Indeed it would be strange if mimic representations of them were  
attractive because they disclose the constructive skill of the painter  
or sculptor, and the original realities themselves were not more  
interesting, to all at any rate that have eyes to discern the reasons  
that presided over their formation' (Ogle's Trans.).

The thought of the shaping and plastic power of nature is in one form or another a persistent one in Greek philosophy and literature. In Plato (*Soph.* 265 B sqq.) God is the divine artist; in the Stoics nature, 'artifex,' 'artificiosa,' fashions by instinct works which human skill cannot equal (*Cic. de Nat. D.* ii. 22); with them the universe is the divine poem. In Plotinus God is artist and poet. In Dion Chrysostom (*Ὁλυμπ. Or.* xii. 416 R) Ζεὺς is πρῶτος καὶ τελειότατος δημιουργός: in Philostratus ζωγράφος ὁ Θεός.

<sup>1</sup> *De Part. Anim.* i. 5. 645 a 25, οὐδ' ἔνεκα συνέστηκεν ἡ γέγονε τέλους τὴν τοῦ καλοῦ χώραν εἴληφε.

<sup>2</sup> *Met.* vi. 7. 1032 a 32, ἀπὸ τέχνης δὲ γίγνεται ὅσων τὸ εἶδος ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ. *De Part. Anim.* i. 1. 640 a 31, ἣ δὲ τέχνη λόγος τοῦ ἔργου ὃ ἄνεν τῆς ὕλης. The mental conception of the εἶδος in a concrete form is called νόησις, the impressing of this conception on the matter is called ποίησις, *Met.* vi. 7. 1032 b 15. This whole theory of art is summed up in the words ἡ γὰρ τέχνη τὸ εἶδος (*Met.* vi. 9. 1034 a 24).

affect the real world, to modify the actual. By mere imagery it reveals the ideal form at which nature aims in the highest sphere of organic existence,—in the region, namely, of human life, where her intention is most manifest, though her failures too are most numerous. Resembling nature in a certain instinctive yet rational faculty, it does not follow the halting course of nature's progress. The artist ignores the intervening steps, the slow processes, by which nature attempts to bridge the space between the potential and the actual. The form which nature has been striving, and perhaps vainly striving, to attain stands forth embodied in a creation of the mind. The ideal has taken concrete shape, the finished product stands before us, nor do we ask how it has come to be what it is. The flaws and failures incident to the natural process are removed, and in a glorified appearance we discern nature's ideal intention. Fine art, then, is a completion of nature in a sense not applicable to useful art; it presents to us only an image, but a purified image of nature's original.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In some domains nature carries out her artistic intentions in a manner that surpasses all the efforts of art; and in one place Aristotle actually says *μᾶλλον δ' ἐστὶ τὸ οὐδ' ἕνεκα καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἐν τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ἔργοις ἢ ἐν τοῖς τῆς τέχνης* (*de Part. Anim.* i. 1. 639 b 19). This, however, requires to be taken with proper qualification. Similarly the continuity of nature is contrasted with the want of continuity in a bad tragedy. *Met.* xiii. 3.



Such would appear to be Aristotle's position. We may here note the difference between this view and the attitude adopted by Plato towards fine art, especially in the *Republic*; remembering, however, that Plato was capable of writing also in another strain and in a different mood. Starting from the notion of pure Being he found reality only in the world of ideas, sensible phenomena being but so many images which at best remind us of the celestial archetype. To him Becoming was the simple antithesis of Being; it meant the world of change, the sphere of phenomena, the region in which the individual life appears for a moment and then vanishes away. The poet or painter holds up a mirror to material objects—earth, plants, animals, mankind—and catches a reflection of the world around him, which is itself only the reflection of the ideal.<sup>1</sup> The actual world therefore stands nearer to the idea than the artistic imitation, and fine art is a copy of a copy, twice removed from truth.<sup>2</sup> It is conversant with the outward shows and semblances

Plato's  
sections

1090 b 19, οὐκ ἔοικε δὲ ἡ φύσις ἐπεισοδιώδους οὕσα ἐκ τῶν φαινόμενων ὥσπερ μοχθηρὰ τραγῳδία. The general position taken up by Aristotle is not materially different from that of Goethe when he says: 'Nature in many of her works reveals a charm of beauty which no human art can hope to reach; but I am by no means of opinion that she is beautiful in all her aspects. Her intentions are indeed always good, but not so the conditions which are required to make her manifest herself completely.'

<sup>1</sup> *Rep.* x. 596 E.

<sup>2</sup> *Rep.* x. 597 E.

of things, and produces its effects by illusions of form and colour, which dupe the senses. The imitative artist does not need more than a surface acquaintance with the thing he represents. He is on a level below the skilled craftsman whose art is intelligent and based on rational principles, and who alone has a title to be called a 'maker' or creator. A painter may paint a table very admirably without knowing anything of the inner construction of a table, a knowledge which the carpenter, who would fashion it for its proper end, must possess. And poets, too, whose ideas of men are formed on a limited experience,<sup>1</sup> cannot pass beyond the range of that experience, they have no insight into the nature of man, into the human soul as it is in itself; this can be attained only by philosophic study.

The fundamental thought of Aristotle's philosophy, on the other hand, is Becoming not Being; and Becoming to him meant not an appearing and a vanishing away, but a process of development, an unfolding of what is already in the germ, an upward ascent ending in Being which is the highest object of knowledge. The concrete individual thing is not a shadowy appearance but the primary reality. The outward and material world, the diverse manifestations of nature's life, organic and inorganic, the processes of birth and decay,

<sup>1</sup> *Timaeus* 19 D.

the manifold forms of sensuous beauty, all gained a new importance for his philosophy. Physical science, slighted by Plato, was passionately studied by Aristotle. Fine art was no longer twice removed from the truth of things; it was the manifestation of a higher truth, the expression of the universal which is not outside of and apart from the particular, but presupposed in each particular.

The work of art was not a semblance opposed to reality, but the image of a reality which is penetrated by the idea, and through which the idea shows more apparent than in the actual world. Whereas Plato had laid it down that 'the greatest and fairest things are done by nature, and the lesser by art, which receives from nature all the greater and primeval creations and fashions them in detail,'<sup>1</sup> Aristotle saw in fine art a rational faculty which divines nature's unfulfilled intentions, and reveals her ideal to sense. The illusions which fine art employs do not cheat the mind; they image forth the immanent idea which cannot find adequate expression under the forms of material existence.

Some critics, it may be observed, have attempted to show that the fundamental principles of fine art are deduced by Aristotle from the idea of the beautiful. But this is to antedate the theory of modern aesthetics, and to read into Aristotle more

<sup>1</sup> *Laws* x. 889 A. Jowett's Trans.

than any impartial interpretation can find in him. The view cannot be supported except by forced inferences, in which many links of the argument have to be supplied, and by extracting philosophical meanings of far-reaching import out of chance expressions. Aristotle's conception of fine art, so far as it is developed, is entirely detached from any theory of the beautiful—a separation which is characteristic of all ancient aesthetic criticism down to a late period. Plotinus, working out Plato's ideas with the modifications required by his own mysticism, attempted to determine the idea of the beautiful as a fundamental problem of art, and with it to solve the difficult and hitherto neglected problem as to the meaning of the ugly. He based his theory of fine art on a particular conception of the beautiful; but Aristotle is still far removed from this point of view. While he assumes almost as an obvious truth that beauty is indispensable in a work of art, and essential to the attainment of its end, and while he throws out hints as to the component elements of the beautiful,<sup>1</sup> he has nowhere analysed that idea, nor did he perhaps regard the beautiful, in its purely aesthetic sense, as forming a separate domain of philosophic inquiry. It is useless, out of the fragmentary observations Aristotle has left us, to seek to con-

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* vii. 4; *Met.* xii. 3. 1078 a 36; cf. *Probl.* xvii. 1. 915 b 16; Plato *Phileb.* 64 E.

struct a theory of the beautiful. He makes beauty a regulative principle of art, but he never says or implies that the manifestation of the beautiful is the end of art. The objective laws of art are deduced not from an inquiry into the beautiful, but from an observation of art as it is and of the effects which it produces.

## CHAPTER III

### POETIC TRUTH

WHAT is true of fine art in general is explicitly asserted by Aristotle of poetry alone, to which in a unique manner it applies. Poetry expresses most adequately the universal element in human nature and in life. As a revelation of the universal it abstracts from human life much that is accidental. It liberates us from the tyranny of physical surroundings. It can disregard material needs and animal longings. Thought disengages itself from sense and makes itself supreme over things outward. 'It is not the function of the poet,' says Aristotle, 'to relate what has happened, but what may happen,—what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity. The poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose. The work of Herodotus might be put into verse, and it would still be a species of history, with metre no less than without it. The true difference is that one relates what has happened, the other

what may happen.'<sup>1</sup> The first distinguishing mark, then, of poetry is that it has a higher subject matter than history; it expresses the universal (τὰ καθόλου) not the particular (τὰ καθ' ἑκάστων), the permanent possibilities of human nature (οἷα ἂν γένοιτο); it does not merely tell the story of the individual life, 'what Alcibiades did or suffered.'<sup>2</sup>

Though we may be inclined to take exception to the criticism which appears to limit history to dry chronicles, and to overlook the existence of a history such as that of Thucydides, yet the main thought here cannot be disputed. History is based upon facts, and with these it is primarily concerned; poetry transforms its facts into truths. The history of Herodotus, in spite of the epic grandeur of the theme and a unity of design, which though obscured is not effaced by the numerous digressions, would still, as Aristotle says, be history and not poetry even if it were put into verse. Next, poetry exhibits a more rigorous connexion of events; cause and event are linked together in 'probable or necessary sequence' (κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον). Historical compositions, as Aristotle observes in a later chapter, are a record of actual facts, of particular events, strung together in the order of time but

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ix. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* ix. 4.

without any clear causal connexion.<sup>1</sup> Not only in the development of the plot<sup>2</sup> but also in the internal working of character,<sup>3</sup> the drama observes a stricter and more logical order than that of actual experience. The rule of probability which Aristotle enjoins is not the narrow 'vraisemblance' which it was understood to mean by many of the older French critics, which would shut the poet out from the higher regions of the imagination and confine him to the trivial round of immediate reality. The incidents of every tragedy worthy of the name are improbable if measured by the likelihood of their everyday occurrence,—improbable in the same degree in which characters capable of great deeds and great passions are rare. The rule of 'probability,' as also that of 'necessity,' refers rather to the internal structure of a poem; it is

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxiii. 1-2, καὶ (δεῖ) μὴ ὁμοίας ἱστορίαις τὰς συνθέσεις (ἱστορίας τὰς συνήθεις codd.) εἶναι, ἐν αἷς ἀνάγκη οὐχὶ μίᾳ πράξεως ποιεῖσθαι δῆλωσιν ἀλλ' ἐνὸς χρόνου, ὅσα ἐν τούτῳ συνέβη περὶ ἓνα ἢ πλείους, ὧν ἕκαστον ὡς ἔτυχεν ἔχει πρὸς ἄλλα. The reading of the MSS. ἱστορίας τὰς συνήθεις makes an intolerably harsh form of inverted comparison, and Dacier's conjecture above given is most probably right: 'the structure (of the epic) should not resemble the histories. . . .' The Arabic version, as I learn from Professor Margoliouth, has no equivalent for συνήθεις and seems to point, but by no means certainly, to συνθέσεις.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* ix. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* xv. 6, χρὴ δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἡθεσιν ὥσπερ καὶ ἐν τῇ τῶν πραγμάτων συστάσει αἰεὶ ζητεῖν ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον ἢ τὸ εἰκός, ὥστε τὸν τοιοῦτον τὰ τοιαῦτα λέγειν ἢ πράττειν ἢ ἀναγκαῖον ἢ εἰκός, καὶ τοῦτο μετὰ τοῦτο γίνεσθαι ἢ ἀναγκαῖον ἢ εἰκός.



with theirs: it dilates in response to the call that is made on it. Such characters are in a sense better known to us—~~more so~~—than our everyday acquaintances. But we do not think of measuring the intrinsic probability of what they say or do by the probability of meeting their counterpart in the actual world.

Few writers have grasped more firmly than Aristotle the relation in which poetical truth stands to empirical fact. He devotes a great part of one chapter (ch. xiv.) to an inquiry into the alleged untruths and impossibilities of poetry. He points out the distinction between errors affecting the essence of the poetic art, and errors of fact relating to other arts.<sup>1</sup> We may here set aside the question of minor oversights, inconsistencies, or technical inaccuracies, holding with him that these are not in themselves a serious flaw, provided they leave the total impression unimpaired. But there is a more fundamental objection which he boldly meets and repels. The world of poetry, it is said, presents not facts but fiction: such things have never happened, such beings have never lived. 'Untrue' (*οὐκ ἀληθῆ*), 'impossible' (*ἀδύνατα*), said the detractors of poetry in Aristotle's day: 'these creations are not real, not true to life.' 'Not real,' replies Aristotle, 'but a higher reality' (*ἀλλὰ*



<sup>1</sup> *Poet.*



the inner law which secures the cohesion of the parts.

The 'probable' is not determined by a numerical average of instances; it is not a condensed expression for what meets us in the common course of things. The *εἰκός* of daily life, the empirically usual, is derived from an observed sequence of facts, and denotes what is normal and regular in its occurrence, the rule, not the exception.<sup>1</sup> But the rule of experience cannot be the law that governs art. The higher creations of poetry move in another plane. The incidents of the drama and the epic are not those of ordinary life: the persons, who here play their parts, are not average men and women. The 'probable' law of their conduct cannot be deduced from commonplace experience, or brought under a statistical average. The thoughts and deeds, the will and the emotion of a Prometheus or a Clytemnestra, a Hamlet or an Othello, are not an epitomised rendering of the ways of meaner mortals. The common man can indeed enter into these characters with more or less intelligence, just because of their full humanity. His nature is for the moment enlarged by sympathy.

<sup>1</sup> *Analyt. Prior.* ii. 27. 70 a 4, ὁ γὰρ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ ἴσασι οὕτω γιγνόμενον ἢ μὴ γιγνόμενον ἢ ὄν ἢ μὴ ὄν, τοῦτ' ἐστὶν εἰκός. As an instance of the ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ (with which the *εἰκός* is here identified) we have in *Analyt. Post.* ii. 12. 96 a 10 the growth of the beard on the chin: οὐ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ἄρρην τὸ γένειον τριχοῦτα. ἀλλ' ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ.

with theirs: it dilates in response to the call that is made on it. Such characters are in a sense better known to us—*γνωριμώτεροι*—than our everyday acquaintances. But we do not think of measuring the intrinsic probability of what they say or do by the probability of meeting their counterpart in the actual world. ✓

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<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxv. 3-4.

βέλτιον), 'what ought to be (ὡς δεῖ), not what is.' Poetry, he means to say, is not concerned with fact, but with what transcends fact; it represents things which are not, and never can be in actual experience; it gives us the 'ought to be'; the form that answers to the true idea.<sup>2</sup> The characters of Sophocles,<sup>3</sup> the ideal forms of Zeuxis,<sup>4</sup> are unreal only in the sense that they surpass reality. They are not untrue to the principles of nature or to her ideal tendencies.

It would seem that in Aristotle's day it was still generally held that 'real events'—under which were included the accepted legends of the people<sup>5</sup>—were alone the proper subjects for tragedy. Names and incidents were alike to be derived from this source. The traditional practice was critically defended by an argument of this kind:—'what has happened is possible: what is possible alone is πιθανόν,—likely, that is, to gain credence.'<sup>6</sup> In ch. ix. Aristotle

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxv. 6 and 17. In § 17 a threefold division of τὸ ἀδύνατον is, as I take it, implicit, and a triple line of defence offered: (i.) ἀνάγειν πρὸς τὴν ποίησιν, an appeal to the general principle of poetic imitation, or the τέλος of the art, which prefers the πιθανόν even if it is ἀδύνατον: (ii.) ἀνάγειν πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον, an appeal to the principle of ideal truth or the higher reality; (iii.) ἀνάγειν πρὸς τὴν δόξαν or πρὸς ᾧ φασιν, an appeal to current tradition or belief. The ἀδύνατα under (ii.) and (iii.) correspond to the οὐκ ἀληθῆ of §§ 6–7, τὸ βέλτιον of § 19 being equivalent to the ὡς δεῖ, οἷους δεῖ (! εἶναι), of § 6 and to the βέλτιον of § 7, while τὴν δόξαν of § 19 answers to οὕτω φασίν of § 6 and ἀλλ' οὖν φασί of § 7. Vahlen and Susemihl take the passage otherwise.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 150 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* xxv. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Poet.* xxv. 17.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 393.

<sup>6</sup> *Poet.* ix. 6.

pleads for an extension of the idea of the 'possible,' from τὰ γενόμενα to οἷα ἂν γένοιτο, from the δυνατό of history to those 'universal' δυνατό where the law of causation appears with more unbroken efficacy and power. He would not restrict the poet's freedom of choice. At the same time he guards himself against being supposed utterly to condemn historical or real subjects. Indeed from many passages we may infer that he regarded the consecrated legends of the past as the richest storehouse of poetic material, though few only of the traditional myths satisfied, in his opinion, the full tragic requirements. The rule of 'what may happen' does not, he observes, exclude 'what has happened.' Some real events have that internal probability or necessity which fits them for poetic treatment.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to notice how guarded is his language—'some real events,' as if by a rare and happy chance.<sup>2</sup> And, no doubt, in general the poet has to extract the ore from a rude mass of legendary or historical fact: to free it from the accidental, the trivial, the irrelevant: to purify it,

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ix. 2, τῶν γὰρ γενομένων ἓνια οὐδὲν κωλύει τοιαῦτα εἶναι οἷα ἂν εἰκὸς γενέσθαι καὶ δυνατό γενέσθαι = τοιαῦτα οἷα ἂν κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς γένοιτο καὶ δυνατό (ἔστι) γενέσθαι. This virtually resolves itself into the formula of ix. 1, οἷα ἂν γένοιτο καὶ τὰ δυνατό κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the similar rule laid down in Plato for τὸ πιθανόν in oratory: *Phaedr.* 272 E, οὐδὲ γὰρ αὖ τὰ πραχθέντα δεῖν λέγειν ἐνίοτε, εἰ μὴ εἰκότως ἢ πεπραγμένα.

in a word, from the dross which always mingles with empirical reality. Even those events which possess an inherent poetical quality, which are, in some sense, poetry ready made for the dramatist, are poetical only in certain detached parts and incidents, not penetrated with poetry throughout. They will need the idealisation of art before they can be combined into the unified structure of the drama. The hints given in subsequent chapters for treating the traditional legends show how all-important in Aristotle's eyes is the shaping activity of the artist, even when he is dealing with the most favourable material. Greek tragedies, though 'founded on fact'—as the phrase goes—transmute that fact into imaginative truth.

The truth, then, of poetry is essentially different from the truth of fact. Things that are outside and beyond the range of our experience, that never have happened and never will happen, may be more true, poetically speaking,—more profoundly true than those daily occurrences which we can with confidence predict. These so-called *ἀδύνατα* are the very *δύνατά* of art, the stuff and substance of which poetry is made.

'What has never anywhere come to pass, that alone never grows old.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Alles wiederholt sich nur im Leben,  
Ewig jung ist nur die Phantasie,  
Was sich nie und nirgends hat begeben  
Das allein veraltet nie.—*Schiller*.

There is another class of 'impossibilities' in poetry, which Aristotle defends on a somewhat different ground. It is the privilege, nay, the duty, of the poet *ψευδῇ λέγειν ὡς δεῖ*, 'to tell lies skilfully': he must learn the true art of fiction.<sup>1</sup> The fiction here intended is, as the context shows, not simply that fiction which is blended with fact in every poetic narrative of real events.<sup>2</sup> The reference here is rather to those tales of a strange and marvellous character,<sup>3</sup> which are admitted into epic more freely than into dramatic poetry. In this art of feigning, Homer, we are told, is the supreme master; and the secret of the art lies in a kind of *παραλογισμός* or fallacy. The explanation added, though given in a somewhat bald and abstract manner, renders the nature of the fallacy perfectly plain.<sup>4</sup> At the outset the

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxiv. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Hor. A. P.* 151 (of Homer),  
atque ita mentitur, sic veris falsa remiscet.

<sup>3</sup> See *Twining* ii. 346 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> The fallacy, namely, of inferring that because a given thing is the necessary consequent of a given antecedent, the consequent necessarily implies the antecedent. Antecedent and consequent are wrongly assumed to be reciprocally convertible; cf. *de Soph. Elench.* 167 b 1 sqq., an example being, 'if it rains, the ground is wet: the ground is wet: therefore it rains.' Similarly in Rhetoric, the skilled speaker adopts a certain appropriate tone and manner which leads the audience to infer that the facts he states are true: *Rhet.* iii. 7. 1408 a 20, *πιθανοὶ δὲ τὸ πρᾶγμα καὶ ἡ οἰκεία λέξις*. *παραλογίζεται γὰρ ἡ ψυχὴ ὡς ἀληθῶς λέγοντος, ὅτι ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις οὕτως ἔχουσιν, ὥστ' οἰόνται, εἰ καὶ μὴ οὕτως ἔχει, ὡς ὁ λέγων,*

poet must be allowed to make certain primary assumptions and create his own environment. Starting from these poetic data—the pre-suppositions of the imagination—he may go whither he will, and carry us with him, so long as he does not dash us against the prosaic ground of fact. He feigns certain imaginary persons, strange situations, incredible adventures. By vividness of narrative and minuteness of detail, and, above all, by the natural sequence of incident and motive, things are made to happen exactly as they would have happened had the fundamental fiction been fact. The effects are so plausible, so life-like, that we yield ourselves instinctively to the illusion, and infer the existence of the supposed cause. For the time being we do not pause to dispute the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* or original falsehood on which the whole fabric is reared.

Such is the essence of *τὸ πιθανόν*, which in various forms runs through the teaching of the *Poetics*. By artistic treatment things incredible

*τὰ πράγματα οὕτως ἔχειν*. Cf. *Rhet.* iii. 12. 1414 a 1 sqq., iii. 16. 1416 a 36 sqq. Twining (ii. 350) compares the observation of Hobbes that ‘probable fiction is similar to reasoning rightly from a false principle.’

The allusion to the *Νίττα* in *Poet.* xxiv. 10 is, doubtless, as Vahlen (*Beitr.* p. 296) shows, to *Odyssey* xix. 164–260. The disguised Odysseus has told Penelope that he has entertained Odysseus in Crete. The detailed description he gives of the appearance, dress, etc., of the hero is recognised by Penelope to be true. She falsely infers that, as the host would have known the appearance of the guest, the stranger who knew it had actually been the host.



in real life wear an air of probability. The impossible not only becomes possible, but natural and even inevitable. In the phraseology of the *Poetics*, the *ἄλογα*, things impossible or improbable to the reason, are so disguised that they become *εὐλογα*: the *ἀδύνατα*, things impossible in fact, become *πιθανά*, and hence *δυνατὰ κατὰ τὸ εἶκός ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον*. <Even the laws of the physical world and the material conditions of existence may conceivably be neglected, if only the inner consistency of the poetry is not sacrificed.> The magic ship of the Phaeacians and the landing of Odysseus on the shores of Ithaca, which 'might have been intolerable if treated by an inferior poet,' are so skilfully managed by Homer that we forget their inherent impossibility.<sup>1</sup> 'Probable impossibilities are,' as Aristotle declares with twice repeated emphasis, 'to be preferred to improbable possibilities.'<sup>2</sup>

The *ἄλογα* or 'irrational elements' which the logical understanding rejects, are greater stumbling-blocks to the poetic sense than mere material impossibilities. For the impossible may cease to be thought of as such; it may become logically inevitable. But the irrational is always liable to provoke the logical faculty into a critical or hostile

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxiv. 10, *Odys.* xiii. 93 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xxiv. 10, *προαιρεῖσθαι τε δεῖ ἀδύνατα εἰκότα μᾶλλον ἢ δυνατὰ ἀπίθανα*. Again, *Poet.* xxv. 17, *αἰρετώτερον πιθανὸν ἀδύνατον ἢ ἀπίθανον καὶ δυνατόν*.

attitude. It seems to contradict the very law of causality to which the higher poetry is subject. It needs, therefore, a special justification, if it is to be admitted at all; and this justification Aristotle discovers in the heightened wonder and admiration, which he regards as proper, in a peculiar degree, to epic poetry.<sup>1</sup> The instance twice cited<sup>2</sup> of the pursuit of Hector in the *Iliad* illustrates the general conditions under which he would allow this license. The scene here alluded to is that in which Achilles chases Hector round the walls of Troy: the Greek army stands motionless, Achilles signing to them to keep still.<sup>3</sup> The incident, if represented on the stage, would appear highly improbable, and even ludicrous. The poetic illusion would be destroyed by the scene being placed directly before the eyes; whereas in epic narrative, the effect produced is powerfully imaginative. Still, even as an epic incident, Aristotle appears—strangely enough—to think

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxiv. 8, μάλλον δ' ἐνδέχεται ἐν τῇ ἐποποιίᾳ τὸ ἄλογον, δι' ὃ συμβαίνει μάλιστα τὸ θαυμαστόν.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xxiv. 8 and xxv. 5. In the former passage the incident is pronounced to be unfit for the drama; in the latter, it is in itself a *ἁμάρτημα* but justified by the effect, and justified only as an epic incident. Further, in ch. xxiv. it is spoken of as an *ἄλογον*, in ch. xxv.—less accurately—as an *ἀδύνατον*. All *ἄλογα* are not *ἀδύνατα*, but all *ἀδύνατα*, if realised to be such, are *ἄλογα*. But, as above explained, the art of the poet can make the *ἀδύνατα* cease to be *ἄλογα* and become *πιθανά*.

<sup>3</sup> *Iliad* xxii. 205, λαοῖσιν δ' ἀνένευε κρήατι δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.

that it is open to some censure, and justified only by two considerations. First, the total effect is impressive: we experience a heightened wonder, a pleasurable astonishment, which effaces the sense of incongruity and satisfies the aesthetic end.<sup>1</sup> In the next place, a like effect could not have been produced by other means.<sup>2</sup>

There is another form of 'the impossible,' and even of 'the irrational,' which, according to Aristotle, may be admitted into poetry. Some things there are which cannot be defended either as the expression of a higher reality, or as constituting a whole so coherent and connected that we acquiesce in them without effort. They refuse to fit into our scheme of the universe, or to blend with the other elements of our thought. Still, it may be, they are part of the traditional belief, and are enshrined in popular legend or superstition. If not true, they are believed to be true. Though they cannot be explained rationally, it is generally felt that there is 'something in them.' Current beliefs like these cannot be wholly ignored or rudely rejected by the poet. There are stories

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* *xxv.* 5, ἡμάρτηται, ἀλλ' ὁρθῶς ἔχει, εἰ τυγχάνει τοῦ τέλους τοῦ αὐτῆς (τὸ γὰρ τέλος εἴρηται), εἰ οὕτως ἐκπληκτικώτερον ἢ αὐτὸ ἢ ἄλλο ποιεῖ μέρος.

<sup>2</sup> *Ic.* εἰ μέντοι τὸ τέλος ἢ μᾶλλον ἢ <μὴ> ἦττον ἐνεδέχετο ὑπάρχειν καὶ κατὰ τὴν περὶ τούτων τέχνην, [ἡμαρτῆσθαι] οὐκ ὁρθῶς. Cf. *xxv.* 19, ὁρθὴ ἐπιτίμησις ἀλογία . . . ὅταν μὴ ἀνάγκης οὕσης μὴθ' ἐν χρήσῃ τῷ ἀλόγῳ.

of the gods, of which it is enough to say that, whether true or false, above or below reality, 'yet so runs the tale.'<sup>1</sup> The principle here laid down will apply to the introduction of the marvellous and supernatural under many forms in poetry. But a distinction ought perhaps to be drawn. Take a case where the imagination of a people, such as the Greeks, has been long at work upon its own mythology, and has embodied in clear poetic form certain underlying sentiments and convictions of the race. Facts in themselves marvellous or supernatural have taken coherent shape, and been inwrought into the substance of the national belief. The results so obtained may be at variance with empirical fact, yet they are none the less proper material for the poet. The legends may be among the *ἀδύνατα* of experience; they are not among the *ἄλογα* of poetry. It may even be within the power of the poet to efface the lines between the natural and the supernatural, and to incorporate both worlds in a single order of things, at once rational and imaginative.

Meanwhile, within the legends or traditions so clarified, there remains, we will suppose, some unassimilated material, unharmonised elements which offend the reason. A mythology which has sprung out of childlike intuitions into the truth

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxv. 7, ἀλλ' οἷν φασι.

of things, combined with a childlike ignorance of laws and facts, cannot but retain vestiges of the irrational. It is to these cruder beliefs, which come to the surface even in Hellenic poetry, that the defence to which we now allude will more especially apply:—‘untrue indeed, nay irrational, but so men say.’

Aristotle holds that the irrational—whether under the guise of the supernatural, or under the form of motiveless human activity—is less admissible in dramatic than in epic poetry.<sup>1</sup> He does not assign the reason, but it is obvious. The drama is a typical representation of human action: its mainspring is motive: what is motiveless or uncaused is alien to it. Following strict rules of art Aristotle would exclude the irrational altogether: failing that, he would admit it only under protest and subject to rigid limitations. It may form part of the supposed antecedents of the plot; it has no place within the dramatic action itself.<sup>2</sup> Aristotle summarily rejects the plea that if it is kept out the plot will be destroyed. ‘Such a plot,’ he says, ‘should not in the first instance be constructed.’<sup>3</sup> But he proceeds to qualify this harsh

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxiv. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xv. 7, ἄλογον δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν, εἰ δὲ μή, ἔξω τῆς τραγῳδίας. xxiv. 10, μάλιστα μὲν μηδὲν ἔχειν ἄλογον, εἰ δὲ μή, ἔξω τοῦ μυθεύματος.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* xxiv. 10, ἐξ ἀρχῆς γὰρ οὐ δεῖ συνίστασθαι τοιοῦτους (sc. μύθους).

sentence by a characteristic concession to a human infirmity. He will view the fault leniently, if the incidents in question are made in any degree to look plausible.<sup>1</sup>

From what has been said it will be evident that a material impossibility admits of artistic treatment; hardly so, a moral improbability. When once we are placed at the poet's angle of vision and see with his eyes, the material improbability presents no insuperable difficulty. The chain of cause and effect remains unbroken. Everything follows in due sequence from the acceptance of the primary fiction. But a moral improbability is an *ἄλογον* of the most stubborn kind. No initial act of imaginative surrender can reconcile us to a course of action that is either motiveless or based on unintelligible principles. We can sooner acquiesce in the altered facts of physical nature, than in the violation of the laws which lie at the root of conduct. The instances of the irrational which Aristotle condemns are not indeed confined to moral improbabilities. But he appears to have had these mainly in his mind,—improbabilities that ultimately depend on character, and do violence either to the permanent facts of human nature, or to the feelings and motives proper to a particular situation. Such are the ignorance of Oedipus as to the manner of Laius'

<sup>1</sup> I.e. ἂν δὲ θῇ καὶ φαίνεται εὐλογώτερος, ἐνδέχεται καὶ ἄτοπον <ὄν>.

death: the speechless journey of Telephus from Tegea to Mysia:<sup>1</sup> the scene already mentioned of the pursuit of Hector. A material improbability may itself, again, often be resolved into one of the moral kind. Where the events either in themselves or in their sequence appear irrational, they are frequently the outcome of character inwardly illogical. Though Aristotle does not distinguish between moral and material improbability or impossibility, it falls in with his teaching to recognise in the first a grave artistic defect, which is not necessarily inherent in the second. In the unbroken chain of cause and effect which he postulates for the drama, each of the links is formed by the contact of human will with outward surroundings. The necessity which pervades his theory of tragedy is a logical and moral necessity, binding together the successive moments of a life, the parts of an action, into a significant unity.

Since it is the office of the poet to get at the central meaning of facts, to transform them into truths by supplying vital connexions and causal links, to set the seal of reason upon the outward semblances of art, it follows that the world of poetry rebels against the rule of chance. Now, accident (*τὸ συμβεβηκός*) or chance in Aristotle, exhibiting itself under two forms not always strictly

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxiv. 10.

distinguished,<sup>1</sup> owes its existence to the uncertainty and variability of matter.<sup>2</sup> It is the negation (στέρησις) of Art and Intelligence, and of Nature as an organising force.<sup>3</sup> Its essence is disorder (ἀταξία),<sup>4</sup> absence of design (τὸ ἐνεκά του),<sup>5</sup> want of regularity (τὸ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ). It even borders on the non-existent.<sup>6</sup> Its sphere is that wide domain of human life which baffles foresight,<sup>7</sup> defies reason, abounds in surprises: and also those regions of Nature where we meet with abortive efforts, mistakes, strange and monstrous growths,

<sup>1</sup> Namely as τύχη, 'fortune,' and τὸ αὐτόματον, 'spontaneity.' Cf. *Poet.* ix. 12, ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου καὶ τῆς τύχης. The regular distinction is that given in *Met.* ix. 8. 1065 a 25 sqq., and *Met.* xi. 3. 1070 a 6 sqq. But in *Phys.* ii. 6. 197 a 36, τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀπὸ τύχης πᾶν ἀπὸ ταυτομάτου, τοῦτο δ' οὐ πᾶν ἀπὸ τύχης. 197 b 20, ἀπὸ τύχης δέ, τούτων ὅσα ἀπὸ ταυτομάτου γίνεται τῶν προαιρετῶν τοῖς ἔχουσι προαίρεσιν. See Zeller *Hist. Gr. Phil.* ii. 2. 333-6, Stewart *Eth. Nic.* i. 259.

<sup>2</sup> *Met.* v. 2. 1027 a 13, ὥστε ἡ ὕλη ἔσται αἰτία, ἡ ἐνδεχομένη παρὰ τὸ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ ἄλλως, τοῦ συμβεβηκότος.

<sup>3</sup> Viewed as τύχη it is the στέρησις of τέχνη and νοῦς: viewed as τὸ αὐτόματον it is the στέρησις of φύσις.

<sup>4</sup> *Met.* ix. 8. 1065 a 25, λέγω δὲ τὸ κατὰ συμβεβηκός· τοῦ τοιούτου δ' ἄτακτα καὶ ἄπειρα τὰ αἰτία. *De Part. Anim.* i. 1. 641 b 22, τὸν οὐρανὸν . . . ἐν ᾧ ἀπὸ τύχης καὶ ἀταξίας οὐδ' ὅτι οὐ φαίνεται.

<sup>5</sup> *Anal. Post.* ii. 11. 95 a 8, ἀπὸ τύχης δ' οὐδὲν ἐνεκά του γίνεται.

<sup>6</sup> *Met.* v. 2. 1026 b 21, φαίνεται γὰρ τὸ συμβεβηκὸς ἐγγύς τι τοῦ μὴ ὄντος.

<sup>7</sup> *Met.* ix. 8. 1065 a 33 (of τύχη), διὸ ἄδηλος ἀνθρωπίνῳ λογισμῷ.



which are 'the failures of the principle of design.'<sup>1</sup>

It is true that the action of Chance does not invariably defeat the purposes of Nature or Art. It may so happen that the first step in a natural or an artistic process is the result of Chance.<sup>2</sup> To Chance were due some of the early experiments in the history of poetry, which were destined to lead to ultimate success.<sup>3</sup> But in itself Chance is the very antithesis of Art. It is an irrational cause; it suggests anarchy and misrule; it has no proper place in poetry, which aims at the attainment of an ideal unity. The law of 'the probable'—as well as that of 'the necessary'—excludes chance;<sup>4</sup> and yet in a popular sense nothing is more 'probable' than the occurrence of what is called accident. We gather from the *Poetics* that the introduction

<sup>1</sup> *Phys.* ii. 8. 199 b 3 (just as in art there are failures in the effort to attain the end), ὁμοίως ἂν ἔχοι καὶ ἐν τοῖς φυσικοῖς, καὶ τὰ τέρατα ἀμαρτήματα ἐκείνου τοῦ ἕνεκά του. On τέρατα in Nature cf. *de Gen. Anim.* iv. 4. 770 b 9, ἔστι γὰρ τὸ τέρας τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τι, παρὰ φύσιν δ' οὐ πᾶσαν ἀλλὰ τὴν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ. The mere τερατώδες in tragedy is emphatically condemned *Poet.* xiv. 2, οἱ δὲ μὴ τὸ φοβερὸν διὰ τῆς ὀψείας ἀλλὰ τὸ τερατώδες μόνον παρασκευάζοντες οὐδὲν τραγῳδίᾳ κοινωνοῦσιν.

<sup>2</sup> *Eth. Nic.* vi. 4. 1140 a 19, καθάπερ καὶ Ἀγάθων φησὶ.  
τέχνη τύχην ἑστερξε καὶ τύχη τέχνην.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* xiv. 9, ζητούντες γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ τέχνης ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τύχης εἶρον τὸ τοιοῦτον παρασκευάζειν ἐν τοῖς μύθοις.

<sup>4</sup> *De Gen. et Corr.* ii. 6. 333 b 6, τὰ δὲ παρὰ τὸ αἰὶ καὶ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ ἀπὸ ταῦτομάτου καὶ ἀπὸ τύχης. Cf. *de Caelo* i. 12. 282 a 33.

of anomalous and abnormal incidents in poetry was sometimes defended by the saying of Agathon: 'It is probable that many things should happen contrary to probability.'<sup>1</sup> A similar saying appears to have been current by way of mitigating the appearance of monstrosities in nature: 'The unnatural is occasionally, and in a fashion, natural.'<sup>2</sup> But as a man of science Aristotle does not regard the deviation from nature as in a proper sense natural: nor, as a writer on art, does he lend his authority to the twice quoted phrase of Agathon. That phrase, indeed, violates the spirit, if not the letter, of all that he has written on dramatic probability. 'Miss Edgeworth,' says Newman,<sup>3</sup> 'sometimes apologises for certain incidents in her tales, by stating that they took place "by one of those strange chances which occur in life, but seem incredible when found in writing."' Such an excuse evinces a misconception of the principle of fiction, which being the perfection of the actual, prohibits the introduction of any such anomalies of experience.' The 'strange chances' here spoken of,

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xviii. 6, ἔστιν δὲ τοῦτο <καὶ> εἰκὸς ὥσπερ Ἀγάθων λέγει, εἰκὸς γὰρ γίνεσθαι πολλὰ καὶ παρὰ τὸ εἰκός. xxv. 17, οὕτω τε καὶ ὅτι ποτὲ οὐκ ἄλογόν ἐστιν· εἰκὸς γὰρ καὶ παρὰ τὸ εἰκὸς γίνεσθαι.

<sup>2</sup> *De Gen. Anim.* iv. 4. 770 b 15, ἥττον εἶναι δοκεῖ τέρας διὰ τὸ καὶ τὸ παρὰ φύσιν εἶναι τρόπον τινὰ κατὰ φύσιν.

<sup>3</sup> "Poetry, with reference to Aristotle's *Poetics*" (*Essays, Critical and Historical*).

'the anomalies of experience,' are in fact the 'improbable possibilities'<sup>1</sup> which Aristotle disallows. For chance with its inherent unreason is as far as possible banished by him from the domain of poetry,—except indeed where the skill of the poet can impart to it an appearance of design.<sup>2</sup> Nor does this exclusion hold good only in the more serious forms of poetry. It has been held by some modern writers, that comedy differs from tragedy in representing a world of chance, where law is suspended and the will of the individual reigns supreme. But this is not in accordance with the *Poetics*. The incidents of comedy—at least of such comedy as Aristotle approves—are 'framed on lines of probability.'<sup>3</sup> The connexion of incidents is, no doubt, looser than in tragedy; the more rigorous rule of 'probability or necessity' is not prescribed: and the variation of phrase appears to be not without design. Yet the plot even of comedy is far removed from the play of accident.

To sum up in a word the results of this discussion. The whole tenor and purpose of the *Poetics* makes it abundantly clear that poetry is not a mere reproduction of empirical fact, a picture of life with

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxiv. 10, δυνατόν ἀπίθανον.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* ix. 12, ἐπεὶ καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τύχης ταῦτα θαυμασιώτατα δοκεῖ ὅσα ὥσπερ ἐπίτηδες φαίνεται γεγονέναι.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* ix. 5, συστήσαντες γὰρ τὸν μῦθον διὰ τῶν εἰκότων κ.τ.λ.

summary

all its trivialities and accidents. The world of the possible which poetry creates is more intelligible than the world of experience. The poet presents permanent and eternal facts, free from the elements of unreason which disturb our comprehension of real events and of human conduct. In fashioning his material he may transcend nature, but he may not contradict her; he must not be disobedient to her habits and principles. He may recreate the actual, but he must avoid the lawless, the fantastic, the impossible. Poetic truth passes the bounds of reality, but it does not wantonly violate the laws which make the real world rational.

Thus poetry in virtue of its higher subject matter and of the closer and more organic union of its parts acquires an ideal unity that history never possesses; for the prose of life is never wholly eliminated from a record of actual facts. The Baconian and the Aristotelian view of poetry, instead of standing in sharp contrast as is sometimes said, will be seen to approximate closely to one another. The well-known words of Bacon run thus:—

‘Therefore, because the acts or events of true history have not that magnitude which satisfieth the mind of man, Poesy feigneth acts and events greater and more heroical; . . . because true history representeth actions and events more ordinary and less interchanged, therefore Poesy endueth them with more rareness: so as it appeareth that Poesy

serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality, and delectation. And, therefore, it was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind, whereas Reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things.' <sup>1</sup>

It may be noticed that the opposition between the poet and the historian in the *Poetics* is incidentally introduced to illustrate the sense in which a tragedy is one and a whole.<sup>2</sup> These two notions as understood by Aristotle are not identical. A unity is composed of a plurality of parts which cohere together and fall under a common idea, but are not necessarily combined in a definite order. The notion of a whole implies something more. The parts which constitute it must be inwardly connected, arranged in a certain order, structurally

<sup>1</sup> Bacon *de Aug. Scient.* ii. 13. The still more vigorous Latin deserves to be quoted: 'Cum res gestae et eventus, qui verae historiae subiciuntur, non sint eius amplitudinis in qua anima humana sibi satisfaciat, praesto est poesis, quae facta magis heroica confingat. . . . Cum historia vera, obvia rerum satietate et similitudine, animae humanae fastidio sit, reficit eam poesis, inexpectata et varia et vicissitudinum plena canena. Quare et merito etiam divinitatis cuiuspiam particeps videri possit; quia animum erigit et in sublime rapit; rerum simulacra ad animi desideria accommodando, non animum rebus (quod ratio facit et historia) submitiendo.' In the sentence above omitted Poetry is said to correct history, setting forth 'exitus et fortunas secundum merita et ex lege Nemeseos.' This is not Aristotelian.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* ix. 1, φανερόν δὲ ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων κ.τ.λ.

related, and combined into a system. A whole is not a mere mass or sum of external parts which may be transposed at will, any one of which may be omitted without perceptibly affecting the rest.<sup>1</sup> It is a unity which is unfolded and expanded according to the law of its own nature, an organism which develops from within. By the rule, again, of beauty, which is a first requirement of art, a poetic creation must exhibit at once unity and plurality. If it is too small the whole is perceived but not the parts; if too large the parts are perceived but not the whole.<sup>2</sup> The idea of an organism evidently underlies all Aristotle's rules about unity;<sup>3</sup> it is tacitly assumed as a first principle of

<sup>1</sup> *Met.* iv. 26. 1024 a 1, ὅσων μὲν μὴ ποιεῖ ἡ θέσις διαφορὰν, πᾶν λέγεται, ὅσων δὲ ποιεῖ, ὅλον. Ibid. 1023 b 26, ὅλον λέγεται οὐδὲ μὴδὲν ἀπεισι μέρος! ἐξ ὧν λέγεται ὅλον φύσει κ.τ.λ. Cf. *Poet.* viii. 4, ὁ γὰρ προσὸν ἢ μὴ προσὸν μὴδὲν ποιεῖ ἐπέδηλον, οὐδὲν μόνον τοῦ ὅλου ἐστίν.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* vii. 4-5. Cf. the rules laid down for the size of a city in *Pol.* iv. (vii.) 4. 1326 a 34 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Stewart *Eth. Nic.* i. 194: 'Living organisms and works of art are σχήματα, definite after their kinds, which Nature and Man respectively form by qualifying matter. The quantity of matter used in any case is determined by the form subserved; the size of a particular organ, or part, is determined by its form, which again is determined by the form (limiting the size) of the whole organism or work. Thus animals and plants grow to sizes determined by their separate structures, habitats, and conditions of life, and each separate organ observes the proportion of the whole to which it belongs. The painter or sculptor considers the symmetry of the whole composition in every detail of his work. The conductor of a choir is forced to exclude a voice which sur-

art, and in one passage is expressly mentioned as that from which the rule of epic unity is deduced. 'The plot must, as in a tragedy, be dramatically constructed; it must have for its subject a single action, whole and complete, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. *It will thus resemble a single and coherent picture of a living organism, and produce the pleasure proper to it.*'<sup>1</sup>

note  
translat

passes all the others conspicuously in beauty. *Pol.* iii. 8. 1284 b 8, οὐτε γὰρ γραφεὺς ἐάσειεν ἂν τὸν ὑπερβάλλοντα πόδα τῆς συμμετρίας ἔχειν τὸ ζῶον, οὐδ' εἰ διαφέροι τὸ κάλλος· οὐτε ναυπηγὸς τρέμναν ἢ τῶν ἄλλων τι μορίων τῶν τῆς νεώς· οὐδὲ δὴ χοροδιδάσκαλος τὸν μείζον καὶ κάλλιον τοῦ παντὸς χοροῦ φθεγγόμενον ἴσους συγχορεύειν. In all cases form dominates matter, quality quantity.'

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 1, δεῖ τοὺς μύθους καθάπερ ἐν ταῖς τραγῳδίαις συνεστάναι δραματικούς καὶ περὶ μίαν πράξιν ὅλην καὶ τελείαν, οὐσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ μέσα καὶ τέλος, ἥ ὥσπερ ζῶον ἐν ὅλῳ ποιῇ τὴν οἰκείαν ἡδονήν. Here, as in vii. 4-5, ζῶον appears to be the figure of a ζῶον, for 'it would surely be absurd to talk of an animal giving an οἰκεία ἡδονή.' So writes Mr. R. P. Hardie (in *Mind*, vol. iv. No. 15), adding that in *Phaedrus* 264 C (quoted p. 188) the word γεγραμμένα puts the matter beyond doubt. His reasoning in favour of ζῶον as bearing this meaning also in vii. 4-5 seems convincing, and, moreover, justifies the reading σωμάτων of the MSS. in § 5, 1451 a 3. 'The reference to painting, it is true, has been doubted, but I think on insufficient grounds. It depends on the interpretation of the word ζῶον, which is Aristotle's usual example of a homonym. The two contexts from which the meaning has to be determined are these:—ἐπεὶ τὸ καλὸν καὶ ζῶον καὶ ἅπαν πᾶγμα ὃ συνέστηκεν ἐκ τινῶν οὐ μόνον ταῦτα τεταγμένα δεῖ ἔχειν . . . : and ὥστε δεῖ καθάπερ ἐπὶ τῶν σωμάτων καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ζῶων . . . οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μύθων. The meaning of πᾶγμα ὃ συνέστηκεν ἐκ τινῶν and τὰ σώματα seems plain from other passages in Aristotle, for instance *de Anima* 412 a 11, where he

Plato in the *Phaedrus* had insisted that every artistic composition, whether in prose or verse, should have an organic unity. 'You will allow that every discourse ought to be constructed like a picture of a living organism, having its own body and head and feet; it must have middle and extremities, drawn in a manner agreeable to one another and to the whole.'<sup>1</sup> Aristotle took up the hint; the

identifies οὐσία ὡς συνθέτη (substantia composita) with σώματα, and divides these into φυσικὰ σώματα and the rest, the former class again being divided according as they are ἔμψυχα or ἀψυχα. Thus animated bodies would seem to be "composite" in the fullest sense of the word. "ζῶον" then in the present passage in the *Poetics* must be equivalent to "picture," in which sense, however, it would naturally suggest to a Greek the picture of a ζῶον in the sense of σῶμα ἔμψυχον.'

According to this interpretation of vii. 4-5, one of the conditions of τὸ καλόν, namely a certain μέγεθος, is illustrated by a comparison between painting and poetry.

For other examples of ζῶον in a similar sense cf. Plato *Lysis*, ii. 669 A, πάντες μέντ' ἂν . . . τὰ καλὰ τῶν ζῶων ἐγινώσκωμεν. vi. 769 A, and C, εἴαν τι σφάλῃται τὸ ζῶον ὑπὸ χρόνου. *Stat.* 425 A, 429 A, οὐκοῦν οἱ μὲν ἀμείνους τὰ αὐτῶν ἔργα καλλίως παρέχονται, τὰ ζῶα, οἱ δὲ φαυλότερα; 430 D, ἐπ' ἀμφοτέροις τοῖς μιμήμασι, τοῖς τε ζῴοις καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν. *Rep.* vii. 515 A, ἀνδριάντας καὶ ἄλλα ζῶα λίθινά τε καὶ ξύλινα καὶ παντοῖα εἰργασμένα (cf. *de Gen. Anim.* ii. 4. 740 a 15 quoted p. 189). In *de Mundo* 6. 398 b 18 ζῶον is used of a puppet worked by οἱ νευροσπάσται.

<sup>1</sup> *Phaedr.* 264 C, ἀλλὰ τόδε γε οἶμαί σε φάναι ἂν, δεῖν πάντα λόγον ὥσπερ ζῶον συνεστάναι σῶμά τι ἔχοντα αὐτὸν αὐτοῦ, ὥστε μήτε ἀκέφαλον εἶναι μήτε ἄπουν, ἀλλὰ μέσα τε ἔχειν καὶ ἄκρα, πρέποντ' ἀλλήλοις καὶ τῷ ὅλῳ γεγραμμένα. Cf. *Polit.* 277 C, where the discussion is compared to the sketch of a ζῶον in a painting: ἀλλ' ἀτεχνῶς ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν ὥσπερ ζῶον τὴν ἐξωθεν μὲν



passage above quoted from the *Poetics* is a remarkable echo of the words of the *Phaedrus*; and indeed the idea may be said to be at the basis of his whole poetic criticism.

A work then of poetic art, as he conceives it, while it manifests the universal is yet a concrete and individual reality, a coherent whole, animated by a living principle—or by something which is at least the counterpart of life—and framed according to the laws of organic beauty. The artistic product is not indeed in a literal sense alive; for life or soul is in Aristotle the result of the proper form being impressed upon the proper matter.<sup>1</sup> Now, in art the matter depends on the choice of the artist; it has no necessary relation to the form which is impressed on it. That form it passively receives, but it is not thereby endowed with any active principle of life or movement. The form or essence lives truly only in the mind of the artist who conceived the work, and it is in thought alone that it is transferred to the dead matter with which it has no natural affinity. The artist, or the spectator who has entered into the artist's thought, by a

περιγραφὴν ἔοικεν ἱκανῶς ἔχειν, τὴν δὲ οἷον τοῖς φαρμάκοις καὶ τῇ συγκράσει τῶν χρωμάτων ἐνάργειαν οὐκ ἀπειληφέναι πω.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *de Part. Anim.* i. 1. 640 b 32 sqq. A dead body has the same outward configuration as a living one, yet it is not a man; so too a hand of brass or of wood is a hand only in name. In *de Gen. Anim.* ii. 4. 740 a 15 works of art are spoken of as ξυλίνων ἢ λιθίνων ζῶων, and are contrasted with the truly living organism.

mental act lends life to the artistic creation; he speaks, he thinks of it as a thing of life; but it has no inherent principle of movement; it is in truth not alive but merely the semblance of a living reality.<sup>1</sup>

Returning now to the discussion about poetry and history we shall better understand Aristotle's general conclusion, which is contained in the words so well known and so often misunderstood: 'Poetry is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history,'<sup>2</sup> where *σπουδαιότερον* denotes 'higher in the scale';<sup>3</sup>—not 'more serious,' for the words apply even to comedy, nor, again, 'more moral,' which is quite alien to the context;—and the reason of the higher worth of poetry is that it approaches nearer to the universal, which itself

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Stewart *Eth. Nic.* ii. 42: 'τέχνη realises its good in an external *ἔργον*, and the *εἶδος* which it imposes on *ὕλη* is only a surface form—very different from the forms penetrating to the very heart of the *ὕλη*, which *φύσις* and *ἀρετή* produce (cf. *Eth. Nic.* ii. 6. 9, ἡ δ' ἀρετὴ πάσης τέχνης ἀκριβεστέρα καὶ ἀμείνων ἐστὶν ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ φύσις: *Met.* 30. 1070 a 7, ἡ μὲν οὖν τέχνη ἀρχὴ ἐν ἄλλῳ, ἡ δὲ φύσις ἀρχὴ ἐν αὐτῷ).'

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* ix. 3, διὰ καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποιήσεις ιστορίας ἐστίν· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ποιήσεις μᾶλλον τὰ καθόλου, ἡ δ' ιστορία τὰ καθ' ἕκαστον λέγει.

<sup>3</sup> Teichmüller, *Aristot. Forsch.* ii. 178, who illustrates this sense of *σπουδαῖος* from *Eth. Nic.* vi. 7. 1141 a 20, ἀποπνὴν γὰρ εἴ τις τὴν πολιτικὴν ἢ τὴν φρόνησιν σπουδαιοτάτην ('the highest form of knowledge') οἶσται εἶναι, εἰ μὴ τὸ ἄριστον τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἀνθρωπῶς ἐστίν. Here *σοφία* is a more excellent thing than *φρόνησις* because it has a higher subject matter,—universal principles.

derives its value from being a 'manifestation of the cause'<sup>1</sup> or first principle of things. Poetry in striving to give universal form to its own creations reveals a higher truth than history, and on that account is nearer to philosophy. But though it has a philosophic character it is not philosophy: 'It *tends* to express the universal.' The μάλλον is here a limiting and saving expression; it marks the endeavour and direction of poetry, which cannot however entirely coincide with philosophy. The capacity of poetry is so far limited that it expresses the universal not as it is in itself, but as seen through the medium of sensuous imagery.

Plato, while condemning the poetry of his own country, had gone far towards merging an ideal poetry in philosophy. The artist who is no mere imitator, whose work is a revelation to sense of eternal ideas, being possessed by an imaginative enthusiasm which is akin to the speculative enthusiasm of the philosopher, from the things of sense ascends to that higher region where truth and beauty are one. Aristotle's phrase in this passage of the *Poetics* might, in like manner, appear almost to identify poetry with philosophy. But if we read his meaning in the light of what he says elsewhere and of the general system of his thought, we see that he does not confound the two spheres

<sup>1</sup> *Anal. Post.* i. 31. 88 a 4, τὸ δὲ καθόλου τίμουν ὅτι δηλοῖ τὸ αἴτιον.

though they touch at a single point. Philosophy seeks to discover the universal in the particular; its end is to know and to possess the truth, and in that possession it reposes. The aim of poetry is to represent the universal through the particular, to give a concrete and living embodiment of a universal truth.<sup>1</sup> The universal of poetry is not an abstract idea; it is particularised to sense, it comes before the mind clothed in the form of the concrete, presented under the appearance of a living organism whose parts are in vital and structural relation to the whole.

It is the more necessary to insist on this because Aristotle's own analytical criticism may easily lead to a misconception of his meaning. In applying the method of logical abstraction to the organic parts of a poetic whole he may appear to forget that he is dealing not with a product of abstract thought but with a concrete work of art. The impression may be confirmed by a hasty reading of *Poet.* ch. xvii. 3-4 where the poet is advised first to set forth his plot in its general idea (*ἐκτίθεσθαι*

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nic whole  
analysis?

<sup>1</sup> Cf. R. P. Hardie (in *Mind*, vol. iv. No. 15): 'We must keep in mind that for poetry it is essential that this (i.e. the universal) element should be expressed in matter of some sort. It is in this respect that science differs from poetry. The whole aim of the former is to keep the *εἶδος* abstract, and therefore science uses not *εἰκόνας* but *σημεῖα* or *σύμβολα*, which never really express the *εἶδος* at all, but are of use merely to suggest the abstract *εἶδος* qua abstract.'

καθόλου), abstracting the accidental features of time, place, and persons, and afterwards to fill it in with detail and incident and with proper names. The meaning, however, is not that the poet must assume a general idea and then by conscious reflection make it particular. He starts according to Aristotle from a particular story, from one of the traditional legends, the instance here selected being the legend of Iphigenia. He disentangles the main outline, adding or omitting as artistic purposes may require.

The following lines by Sir John Davies are applied by Coleridge to the poetic imagination<sup>1</sup> :—

‘Thus doth she, when from individual states  
 She doth abstract the universal kinds,  
 Which then re clothed in divers names and fates  
 Steal access thro’ our senses to our minds.’

Such a method does not imply that a general idea shall be embodied in a particular example—that is the method of allegory rather than that of poetry—but that the particular case shall be generalised by artistic treatment. ‘The young poet,’ says Goethe, ‘must do some sort of violence to himself to get out of the mere general idea. No doubt this is difficult; but it is the very life of art.’ ‘A special case requires nothing but the treatment of a poet to become universal and poetical.’ With this Aristotle would have agreed.

<sup>1</sup> *Biog. Lit.* ch. xiv.

Goethe, who tells us that with him 'every idea rapidly changed itself into an image,' was asked what idea he meant to embody in his *Faust*. 'As if I knew myself and could inform them. From heaven, through the world, to hell, would indeed be something; but this is no idea, only a course of action. . . . It was, in short, not in my line, as a poet, to strive to embody anything abstract. I received in my mind impressions and those of a sensuous, animated, charming, varied, hundredfold kind, just as a lively imagination presented them; and I had, as a poet, nothing more to do than artistically to round them off and elaborate such views and impressions, and by means of a lively representation so to bring them forward that others might receive the same impression in hearing or reading my representation of them.'<sup>1</sup>

Coleridge in giving his adhesion to Aristotle's theory thinks it necessary to guard against the misconstruction to which that doctrine is exposed. 'I adopt,' he says, 'with full faith the theory of Aristotle that poetry as poetry is essentially ideal, that it avoids and excludes all accident; that its apparent individualities of rank, character, or occupation, must be representative of a class; and that the persons of poetry must be clothed with generic attributes, with the common attributes of

<sup>1</sup> Eckermann's *Conversations of Goethe*, Transl. (Bohn's series),

the class; not such as one gifted individual might possibly possess, but such as from his situation it is most probable that he would possess.' And he adds in a note, 'Say not that I am recommending abstractions, for these class characteristics which constitute the instructiveness of a character are so modified and particularised in each person of the Shakespearian drama, that life itself does not excite more distinctly that sense of individuality which belongs to real existence. Paradoxical as it may sound, one of the essential properties of geometry is not less essential to dramatic excellence; and Aristotle has accordingly required of the poet an involution of the universal in the individual. The chief differences are, that in geometry it is the universal truth, which is uppermost in the consciousness; in poetry the individual form, in which the truth is clothed.'<sup>1</sup>

Some of these explanatory words themselves are, it must be owned, misleading. Such phrases as 'representative of a class,' 'generic attributes,' 'class characteristics which constitute the instructiveness of a character,' seem to imply a false view of the 'universal' of poetry; as though the 'individuality' were something outside the universal and of no poetic account; yet, he says, 'the individual form' is 'uppermost.' One might think that the 'universal' was a single abstract

<sup>1</sup> *Biog. Lit.* ii. 41.

truth instead of being *all* the truths that meet in the individual. The expression, however, 'such (attributes) as from his situation it is most probable that he would possess' is true and Aristotelian. But how can these attributes be called attributes of 'a class'?

Still it is in the main the same thought which runs through Aristotle, Goethe, and Coleridge,—that the poet while he seems to be concerned only with the particular is in truth concerned with *quod semper quod ubique*. He seizes and reproduces a concrete fact, but transfigures it so that the higher truth, the idea of the universal shines through it.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE END OF FINE ART

have seen what Aristotle means by 'imitative' as an aesthetic term. We now ask, What is the end of 'imitative' art? Here Aristotle makes a sharp distinction. The arts called 'useful' either provide the necessary means of subsistence and satisfy material wants, or furnish the means with its full equipment of moral and intellectual resources. Their end is subordinate to another ulterior end. The end of the fine arts is to give pleasure (πρὸς ἡδονήν) or rational enjoyment.<sup>1</sup>

*Met.* i. 1. 981 b 17 sqq., πλειόνων δ' εὕρισκομένων τεχνῶν, ὧν μὲν πρὸς τὰναγκαῖα τῶν δὲ πρὸς διαγωγὴν οὐσῶν, αἱ τέρους τοὺς τοιούτους ἐκείνων ὑπολαμβάνομεν, διὰ τὸ μὴ χρῆσιν εἶναι τὰς ἐπιστήμας αὐτῶν. The liberal arts which minister to life and minister to pleasure are here said to be πρὸς ἡγῆν, synonymous with which we find πρὸς ἡδονήν b 21. *Id.* i. 2. 982 b 23, πρὸς βρασιώνην καὶ διαγωγὴν. In all of these passages the contrasted expression is τὰναγκαῖα. διαγωγή really means the employment of leisure, and in Aristotle makes a distinction between the higher and lower kinds of pleasurable activity. In the lower sense it is combined in *Eth. Nic.* iv. 8. b 34 with παιδιὰ and is part of ἀνάπαυσις: it denotes the playful forms of social intercourse; in x. 6. 1176 b 12, 14 used of the παιδιαί of the rich and great; in x. 6. 1177 a 9,

(πρὸς διαγωγὴν). A useful art like that of cookery may happen to produce pleasure, but this is no part of its essence; just as a fine art may incidentally produce useful results and become a moral instrument in the hands of the legislator. In neither case is the result to be confounded with the true end of the art. The pleasure, however, which is derived from an art may be of a higher or lower kind, for Aristotle recognises specific differences between pleasures. There is the harmless pleasure,<sup>1</sup> which is afforded by a recreation (ἀνάπαυσις) or a pastime (παιδιά): but a pastime is not an end in itself, it is the rest that fits the busy

οὐ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς τοιαύταις διαγωγαῖς ἡ εὐδαιμονία, it has a baser application to σωματικαὶ ἡδοναί. As an elevated and noble enjoyment it is associated with σχολή in *Pol.* iv. (vii.) 15. 1334 a 16. Under this aspect it admits of special application to the two spheres of art and of philosophy. In *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1339 a 25 it is joined with φρόνησις and stands for the higher aesthetic enjoyment which music affords. From a 30–31 it appears that the musical διαγωγή is an end in itself, and therefore distinct from a παιδιά. In *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1339 b 14 sqq. three ends are mentioned which music may serve—παιδεία, παιδιά, and διαγωγή, and the last is said to combine τὸ καλόν with ἡδονή, both of which elements enter into εὐδαιμονία. Its reference is to the life of thought in *Eth. Nic.* x. 7. 1177 a 27, where it is applied to the activity of the speculative reason, and in *Met.* xi. 7. 1072 b 14, where it denotes the activity of the divine thought. Thus the higher διαγωγή, artistic or philosophic, is the delight which comes from the ideal employment of leisure (cf. τὴν ἐν τῇ σχολῇ διαγωγὴν *Pol.* v. (viii.) 3. 1338 a 21); it is among the blissful moments which constitute εὐδαιμονία. Cf. *Pol.* v. (viii.) 3. 1338 a 1, τὸ δὲ σχολάζειν ἔχειν αὐτὸ δοκεῖ τὴν ἡδονὴν καὶ τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν καὶ τὸ ζῆν μακαρίως.

<sup>1</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1339 b 25.

man for fresh exertion, and is of value as a means to further work; it has in it no element of that well-being or happiness which is the supreme end of life.<sup>1</sup>

Though Aristotle does not assign to the different kinds of art their respective ranks, or expressly say that the pleasure of tragedy is superior to that of comedy, the distinction he draws between various forms of music may be taken as indicating the criterion by which he would judge of other arts. Music, apart from its other functions, may serve as an amusement for children, it is a toy which takes the place of the infant's rattle;<sup>2</sup> or, again, it may afford a noble and rational enjoyment and become an element of the highest happiness to an audience that is capable of appreciating it.<sup>3</sup> Again, Aristotle asserts that the ludicrous in general is inferior to the serious,<sup>4</sup> and counts as a pastime that fits men for serious work. We may probably infer that the same principle holds in literature as in life; that comedy is merely a form of sportive activity; the pleasure derived

<sup>1</sup> *Eth. Nic.* x. 6. 1176 b 30, ἅπαντα γὰρ ὡς εἰπεῖν ἑτέρου ἐνεκα αἰρούμεθα πλὴν τῆς εὐδαιμονίας· τέλος γὰρ αὕτη. σπουδάζειν δὲ καὶ ποιεῖν παιδιᾶς χάριν ἡλίθιον φαίνεται καὶ λίαν παιδικόν· τρέξει δ' ὅπως σπουδάζῃ, κατ' Ἀνάχαρσιν, ὁρθῶς ἔχειν δοκεῖ· ἀνάπαυσι γὰρ ἔοικεν ἡ παιδιὰ, ἀδυνατοῦντες δὲ συνεχῶς ποιεῖν ἀνάπαυσεως δεόνται. οὐ δὲ τέλος ἡ ἀνάπαυσις· γίνεται γὰρ ἐνεκα τῆς ἐνεργείας.

<sup>2</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1339 b 13-17; 6. 1340 b 30.

<sup>3</sup> See note 1 p. 310.

<sup>4</sup> *Eth. Nic.* x. 6. 1177 a 3.

from it is of corresponding quality, it ranks with the other pleasures of sport or recreation. But art in its highest idea is one of the serious activities of the mind which constitute the final well-being of man. Its end is pleasure, but the pleasure peculiar to that state of rational enjoyment in which perfect repose is united with perfect energy. It is not to be confounded with the pleasure found in the rude imitations of early art, arising from the discovery of a likeness. One passage of the *Poetics* might indeed if it stood alone lead us to this inference.<sup>1</sup> The instinct for knowledge, the pleasure of recognition, is there the chief factor in the enjoyment of some at least of the more developed arts. But the reference appears to be rather to the popular appreciation of a likeness than to true aesthetic enjoyment. This is perhaps borne out by the explanation elsewhere given of the pleasure derived from plastic or pictorial imitations of the lower forms of animal life.<sup>2</sup> These objects do not come within the range of artistic imitation as understood

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* iv. 3-5. Cf. *Rhet.* i. 11. 1371 b 4, ἐπεὶ δὲ τὸ μανθάνειν τε ἡδὺ καὶ τὸ θαυμάζειν, καὶ τὰ τοιάδε ἀνάγκη ἡδέα εἶναι οἷον τό τε μιμούμενον, ὥσπερ γραφικὴ καὶ ἀνδριαντοποιία καὶ ποιητικὴ, καὶ πᾶν ὃ ἂν εὖ μεμιμημένον ᾖ, κἂν ᾗ μὴ ἡδὺ αὐτὸ τὸ μεμιμημένον. οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ τούτῳ χαίρει ἀλλὰ συλλογισμός ἐστιν ὅτι τοῦτο ἐκείνο, ὥστε μανθάνειν τι συμβαίνει.

<sup>2</sup> See the passage quoted p. 155 from *de Part. Anim.* i. 5. 645 a 4 sqq., especially the words τὰς μὲν εἰκόνας αὐτῶν θεωροῦντες χαίρομεν ὅτι τὴν δημιουργήσασαν τέχνην συνθεωροῦμεν.

by Aristotle; they do not reproduce the human and mental life with which alone art is concerned. But they give occasion for the display of workman-like skill; and afford a pleasure analogous to that which comes from the contemplation of nature in her adaptation of means to ends.

Aristotle was perhaps inclined unduly to accentuate the purely intellectual side of pictorial and plastic art. But in his treatment of poetry, which holds the sovereign place among the fine arts, he makes it plain that aesthetic enjoyment proper proceeds from an emotional rather than from an intellectual source. The main appeal is not to the reason but to the feelings. In a word, fine art and philosophy, while they occupy distinct territory, each find their complete fruition in a region bordering on the other. The glow of feeling which accompanies the contemplation of what is perfect in art is an elevated delight similar in quality to the glow of speculative thought. Each is a moment of joy complete in itself, and belongs to the ideal sphere of supreme happiness.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Introduction to Hegel's *Philosophy of Fine Art*, translated by B. Bosanquet, London, 1886, p. 12: 'It is no doubt the case that art can be employed as a fleeting pastime, to serve the ends of pleasure and entertainment, to decorate our surroundings, to impart pleasantness to the external conditions of our life, and to emphasise other objects by means of ornament. In this mode of employment art is indeed not independent, not free, but servile. But what we mean to consider is the art which is free in its end as in its means. . . . Fine art is not real art till it is in this sense free,

Some points of difference between Plato and Aristotle are at once apparent. Pleasure to Plato was a word of base associations and a democratic pleasure was doubly ignoble. An imitative art like music is condemned, if for no other reason, because it seeks to please the masses.<sup>1</sup> Poetry, again, has something of the same taint; it is a kind of rhetoric,<sup>2</sup> a pleasant flattery addressed to mixed audiences, and falls therefore into the same group with the art of sophistry, the art of personal adornment, and the art of the pastry-cook, all of which look not to what is best or truly wholesome but to the pleasure of the moment.<sup>3</sup> The vulgar opinion that musical excellence is measured by pleasure seems to Plato a sort of blasphemy;<sup>4</sup> if pleasure is to be taken as a criterion at all, it should be that of the 'one man preeminent in virtue and education.'<sup>5</sup> Even in the *Philebus*, where the claims of pleasure, and especially of aesthetic pleasure, are more carefully analysed and weighed than elsewhere, the highest or unmixed pleasures rank but fifth in the scale of goods.

and only achieves its highest task when it has taken its place in the same sphere with religion and philosophy.'

<sup>1</sup> *Laws* ii. 659 A-C.

<sup>2</sup> Α ῥητορικὴ δημηγορία, *Gorg.* 502 D.

<sup>3</sup> *Gorg.* 462 E-463 B. Cf. *Rep.* ii. 373 B-C.

<sup>4</sup> *Laws* ii. 655 D, καίτοι λέγουσί γε οἱ πλείστοι μουσικῆς ὀρθότητα εἶναι τὴν ἡδονὴν ταῖς ψυχαῖς πορίζουσαν δύναμιν· ἀλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν οὔτε ἀνεκτὸν οὔτε ὅσιον τὸ παράπαν φθέγγεσθαι.

<sup>5</sup> *Laws* ii. 659 A, ἓνα τὸν ἀρετῇ τε καὶ παιδείᾳ διαφέροντα.

Aristotle does not share Plato's distrust of pleasure. / In the *Ethics* while he admits to the full its power to mislead the judgment, and compares its gracious but dangerous influence to that of Helen among the elders of Troy;<sup>1</sup> while he speaks slightly of the pleasures of the mass of men who 'can form no idea of the noble and the truly pleasant whereof they have never tasted,'<sup>2</sup> yet he insists on the necessity of being trained to feel pleasure and pain at the right objects; he never hints that pleasure ought to be suppressed as in itself an evil; nay, it is a normal accompaniment of the exercise of every healthy organ and faculty, it perfects that exercise as an added completeness, 'like the bloom of health on the face of the young.'<sup>3</sup> In the passage of the *Metaphysics* (i. 1) already referred to, the discoverers of the fine arts are said to be 'wiser' than the discoverers of the useful arts for the very reason that the former arts minister to pleasure, not to use.

Again, to Plato poetry and painting and the companion arts, as affording at the best a harmless pleasure,<sup>4</sup> are of the nature of a

<sup>1</sup> *Eth. Nic.* ii. 9. 1109 b 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Eth. Nic.* x. 10. 1179 b 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Eth. Nic.* x. 4. 1174 b 32, ὡς ἐπιγιγνόμενόν τι τέλος, οἷον τοῖς ἀκμαίοις ἡ ὥρα.

<sup>4</sup> *Laws* ii. 667 E, ἀβλαβῇ λέγεις ἡδονὴν μόνον. The same phrase is used by Aristotle in reference to music as a pastime, *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1339 b 25, ὅσα γὰρ ἀβλαβῇ τῶν ἡδέων.

pastime,<sup>1</sup>—a pastime, it may be, more ‘artistic and graceful’<sup>2</sup> than any other kind, but which still contrasts unfavourably with medicine, husbandry, and gymnastics, which have a serious purpose and co-operate with nature.<sup>3</sup> Imitative art, in short, is wanting in moral earnestness; it is a jest, a sport, child’s-play upon the surface of things. Aristotle distinguishes as we have seen between art as a pastime and art as a rational employment of leisure. Comedy and the lower forms of art he would probably rank as a pastime, but not so art in its higher manifestations. Tragedy is the imitation of an action that is the very opposite of a pastime, a serious action (*πράξεως σπουδαίας*), which is concerned with the supreme good or end of life; and the art which reproduces this aspect of life is itself a serious art.

The end, then, of fine art, according to Aristotle’s doctrine, is a certain pleasurable impression produced upon the mind of the hearer or the spectator. We must be careful here not to import the later idea that the artist works merely for his own enjoyment, that the inward satisfaction which

<sup>1</sup> *Polit.* 288 C. Every such art may be called *παίγνιον τι*, ‘a plaything,’ οὐ γὰρ σπουδῆς οὐδὲν αὐτῶν χάριν, ἀλλὰ παιδιᾶς ἕνεκα πάντα δρᾶται. So *Rep.* 602 B.

<sup>2</sup> *Soph.* 234 B, παιδιᾶς δὲ ἔχεις ἢ τι τεχνικώτερον ἢ καὶ χαριέστερον εἶδος ἢ τὸ μιμητικόν;

<sup>3</sup> *Laws* i. 889 D, ταύτας ὁπλοῦσαι τῇ φύσει ἐκοίνωσαν τὴν αὐτῶν δύναμιν.



the creative act affords is for him the end of his art. No such conception of the artist's dignity was formed in Greece, where in truth the artist was honoured less than his art. His professional skill seemed to want something of a self-sufficing and independent activity; and though the poet stood higher in popular estimation than his fellow-artists, because he did not, like the painter and sculptor, approach to the condition of a manual labourer or as a rule make a trade of his work, he too was one who worked not for himself but for others, and so far fell short of a gentlemanly leisure. Aristotle's theory has regard to the pleasure not of the maker, but of the 'spectator' (*θεατής*) who contemplates the finished product. Thus while the pleasures of philosophy are for him who philosophises—for the intellectual act is an end in itself—the pleasures of art are not for the artist but for those who enjoy what he creates; or if the artist shares at all in the distinctive pleasure which belongs to his art, he does so not as an artist but as one of the public.

To those who are familiar with modern modes of thinking it may seem a serious defect in the theory of Aristotle that he makes the end of art to reside in a pleasurable emotion, not in the realisation of a certain objective character that is necessary to the perfection of the work. An artistic creation, it may be said, is complete in

itself; its end is immanent not transcendental. The effect that it produces, whether that effect be immediate or remote, whether it be pleasure or moral improvement, has nothing to do with the object as it is in its essence and inmost character. The true artist concerns himself with external effects as little as does nature herself in the vital processes which are directed towards an end. It was a signal merit, we are reminded, in Aristotle's general philosophical system, that the end of an object is inherent in that object, and is reached when the object has achieved its specific excellence and fulfils the law of its own being.<sup>1</sup> Why, it is said, did not Aristotle see that a painting or a poem, like a natural organism, attains its end not through some external effect but in realising its own idea? If the end of art is to be found in a certain emotional effect, in a pleasure which is purely subjective, the end becomes something arbitrary and accidental, and dependent on each individual's moods. Plato had already shown the way to a truer conception of fine art, for greatly as he misjudged the poetry of his own country, yet he had in his mind the vision of a higher art which should reveal to sense the world of ideas. Here there was at least an objective end for fine art. Aristotle's own definition too of art as 'a

<sup>1</sup> *Phys.* ii. 2. 194 a 28, ἡ δὲ φύσις τέλος καὶ οὐ ἐνεκα. *So Pol.* i. 2. 1252 b 32.

faculty of production in accordance with a true idea'<sup>1</sup> is quoted as showing that he was not far from assigning to fine art an end more consistent with his whole system. If art in general is the faculty of realising a true idea in external form, he might easily have arrived at a definition of fine art not essentially different from the modern conception of it as the revelation of the beautiful in external form.

It is probably not possible to acquit Aristotle of some inconsistency of treatment. According to his general theory of Aesthetics as a branch of Art, its end ought to be the purely objective end of realising the *eidos* in concrete form. But in dealing with particular arts, such as poetry and music, he assumes a subjective end consisting in a certain pleasurable emotion. There is here a formal contradiction from which there appears to be no escape. It would seem that Aristotle in generalising from the observed effects of works of art raises the subjective side of fine art into a prominence which is hardly in keeping with his whole philosophical system. If we seek to develop his line of thought, we may say that the artist, pursuing an end which is external to his productive activity, attains that end when the work of art comes into existence,—that is, when

contra  
eidos  
+  
subject  
  
the end  
of sub  
that we

<sup>1</sup> *Eth. Nic.* vi. 4. 1140 a 10, *ἔξῃς μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς ποιητική.*

the process of change (*γένεσις*) is complete, when the matter (*ύλη*) has been impressed with the artistic form (*εἶδος*), and the potential has been developed into the actual.<sup>1</sup> How are we to know that this end has been attained? By the hedonistic effect produced on the mind of the percipient subject. The work of art is in its nature an appeal to the senses and imagination of the person to whom it is presented; its perfection and success depend on a subjective impression. It attains to complete existence only within the mind, in the pleasure which accompanies this mode of mental activity (*ἐνέργεια*). Thus the productive activity of the artist is not unnaturally subordinated to the receptive activity of the person for whom he produces.

In Aristotle the true nature of a thing can be expressed by means of that which it is 'capable of doing or suffering' (*πέφυκε ποιεῖν ἢ πάσχειν*). Its effect is treated as synonymous with its essential quality.<sup>2</sup> So it is in a work of art. If indeed we desire to characterise precisely its emotional effect

<sup>1</sup> See p. 155 note 1.

<sup>2</sup> The *δύναμις* of a thing is closely allied to its *οὐσία*, *εἶδος*, *λόγος*, *φύσις*. Cf. *de Gen. Anim.* ii. 1. 731 b 19, *τίς ἡ δύναμις* καὶ ὁ λόγος τῆς οὐσίας αὐτῶν; *de Sensu* 3. 439 a 23, *τίς ἐστὶ κοινὴ φύσις καὶ δύναμις*; *Eth. Nic.* v. 4. 1130 b 1, ἄμφω γὰρ ἐν τῇ πρὸς ἕτερον ἔχουσι τὴν δύναμιν. So *Poet.* i. 1, ἣν τινα δύναμιν ἕκαστον ἔχει. Cf. vi. 18, ὁ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐμμέτρων καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν λόγων ἔχει τὴν αὐτὴν δύναμιν.

we must do so by reference to the content of the activity. But the work of art and its effect being inseparable, the artistic object can loosely be spoken of in terms of the emotion it awakens.<sup>1</sup> This view does not, however, make the function of art to depend upon accident and individual caprice. The subjective emotion is deeply grounded in human nature, and thence acquires a kind of objective validity. As in ethics Aristotle assumes a man of moral insight (ὁ φρόνιμος) to whose trained judgment the appreciation of ethical questions is submitted, and who, in the last resort, becomes the 'standard and the law' of right,<sup>2</sup> so too in fine art a man of sound aesthetic instincts (ὁ χαρίεις) is assumed, who is the standard of taste, <sup>uniform</sup> <sup>human</sup> and to him the final appeal is made. He is no mere expert, for Aristotle distrusts the verdict of specialists in the arts<sup>3</sup> and prefers the popular judgment,—but it must be the judgment of a cultivated public. Both in the *Politics* and in the *Poetics* he distinguishes between the lower and

<sup>1</sup> Similarly Schiller finds the essence and end of tragedy in the effect it produces. See his Essay 'Ueber die tragische Kunst,' and a letter to Goethe of Dec. 12, 1797, 'Als dann glaube ich auch eine gewisse Berechnung auf den Zuschauer, von der sich der tragische Poet nicht dispensieren kann, der Hinblick auf einen Zweck, den äussern Eindruck, der bei dieser Dichtungsart nicht ganz verlassen wird, geniert Sie, u.s.w.'

<sup>2</sup> *Eth. Nic.* iii. 4. 1113 a 33, the σπουδαῖος is ὥσπερ κανὼν καὶ μέτρον.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Pol.* iii. 11. 1282 a 1-21.

the higher kind of audience.<sup>1</sup> The 'free and educated listener' at a musical performance is opposed to one of the vulgar sort. Each class of audience enjoys a different kind of music and derives from the performance such pleasure as it is capable of. The inferior kind of enjoyment is not to be denied to those who can appreciate only the inferior type of music—better that they should like this music than none at all—but the lower pleasure is not to be taken as the true end of the musical art.<sup>2</sup>

In the theatre, again, it is noted that tragic poets are tempted to gratify the weakness of their audience by making happy endings to their tragedies. The practice is not entirely forbidden; only, it is insisted, such compositions do not afford

<sup>1</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 7. 1342 a 18–28, ἐπεὶ δ' ὁ θεατῆς διττός, ὁ μὲν ἐλεύθερος καὶ πεπαιδευμένος, ὁ δὲ φορτικός κ.τ.λ. In *Poet.* xxvi. 1, ἡ πρὸς βελτίους θεατὰς μίμησις ἡττον φορτική. Cf. *Plato Laws* ii. 658 E, ἐκείνην εἶναι Μοῦσαν καλλίστην, ἥτις τοὺς βελτίστοις καὶ ἱκανῶς πεπαιδευμένους τέρπει.

In *Rhet.* i. 3. 1358 a 37 the τέλος of the art is in relation to the ἀκροατής: σύγκειται μὲν γὰρ ἐκ τριῶν ὁ λόγος, ἐκ τε τοῦ λέγοντος καὶ περὶ οὗ λέγει καὶ πρὸς ὃν, καὶ τὸ τέλος πρὸς τοῦτόν ἐστι, λέγω δὲ τὸν ἀκροατήν.

<sup>2</sup> In *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1340 a 1–2, the universal pleasure given by music is called ἡ κοινὴ ἡδονή and is φυσική. It is distinct from the higher kind of pleasure.

In *Probl.* xviii. 4. 916 b 36, the art of the musician and of the actor aims only at pleasure: διὰ τί ῥήτορα μὲν καὶ στρατηγὸν καὶ χρηματιστὴν λέγομεν δεινόν, αὐλητὴν δὲ καὶ ὑποκριτὴν οὐ λέγομεν; ἡ ὅτι τῶν μὲν ἡ δύναμις ἄνευ πλεονεξίας (ἡδονῆς γὰρ στοχαστική ἐστι), τῶν δὲ πρὸς τὸ πλεονεκτεῖν;

the characteristic tragic pleasure, but one that properly belongs to comedy.<sup>1</sup> In fine, the end of any art is not 'any chance pleasure,'<sup>2</sup> but the pleasure which is distinctive of the art. To the ideal spectator or listener, who is a man of educated taste and represents an instructed public, every fine art addresses itself; he may be called 'the rule and standard' of that art, as the man of moral insight is of morals; the pleasure that any given work of art affords to him is the end of the art.

Though the end, then, is a state of feeling, it is a feeling that is proper to a normally constituted humanity. The hedonistic effect is not alien to the essence of the art, as has sometimes been thought; it is the subjective aspect of a real objective fact. Each kind of poetry carries with it a distinctive pleasure, which is the criterion by which the work is judged. A tragic action has an inherent capacity of calling forth pity and fear;

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 7-8, δοκεῖ δὲ εἶναι πρώτη διὰ τὴν τῶν θεάτρων ἀσθένειαν, . . . ἔστιν δὲ οὐχ αὕτη <ή> ἀπὸ τραγωδίας ἡδονή ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τῆς κωμωδίας οἰκεία. For the phrase τὴν τῶν θεάτρων ἀσθένειαν cf. *Rhet.* iii. 18. 1419 a 18, οὐ γὰρ οἶόν τε πολλὰ ἱρωτῶν διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τοῦ ἀκροατοῦ, i.e. you cannot (in debate, etc.) put a series of questions on account of the incapacity of a popular audience to follow a long chain of reasoning. *Rhet.* iii. 1. 1404 a 8, διὰ τὴν τοῦ ἀκροατοῦ μοχθηρίαν.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xiv. 2, οὐ γὰρ πᾶσαν δεῖ ζητεῖν ἡδονὴν ἀπὸ τραγωδίας ἀλλὰ τὴν οἰκείαν. xxvi. 7, δεῖ γὰρ οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν ἡδονὴν ποιεῖν αὐτὰς (i.e. tragedy and epic poetry) ἀλλὰ τὴν εἰρημένην: with which cf. *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1339 b 32, ἔχει γὰρ ὥσως ἡδονήν τινα καὶ τὸ τέλος, ἀλλ' οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν.

this quality must be impressed by the poet on the dramatic material;<sup>1</sup> and if it is artistically done, the peculiar pleasure arising out of the union of the pitiable and the terrible will be awakened in the mind of every one who possesses normal human sympathies and faculties. The test of artistic merit in a tragedy is the degree in which it fulfils this, its distinctive function. All the rules prescribed by Aristotle for the tragic poet flow from the same primary requirement,—those which determine the proper construction of the plot, the character of the ideal hero, the best form of recognition and the like. The state of pleasurable feeling is not an accidental result, but is inherently related to the object which calls it forth. Though the pleasure of the percipient is necessary to the fulfilment of the function of any art, the subjective impression has in it an enduring and universal element.

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xiv. 3, ἐπεὶ δὲ τὴν ἀπὸ ἐλέου καὶ φόβου διὰ μιμήσεως δεῖ ἡδονὴν παρασκευάζειν τὸν ποιητὴν, φανερόν ὡς τοῦτο ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν ἐμποιητέον.



## CHAPTER V

### ART AND MORALITY

THE question as to the proper end of fine art was discussed in Greece in its special application to poetry. Two views were currently held. The traditional one, which had gained wide acceptance, was that poetry has a direct moral purpose; the primary function of a poet is that of a teacher. Even after professional teachers of the art of conduct had appeared in Greece the poets were not deposed from the educational office which time had consecrated. Homer was still thought of less as the inspired poet who charmed the imagination than as the great teacher who had laid down all the rules needed for the conduct of life, and in whom were hidden all the lessons of philosophy. The other theory, tacitly no doubt held by many, but put into definite shape first by Aristotle, was that poetry is an emotional delight, its end is to give pleasure. Strabo (*circa* 24 B.C.) alludes to the two conflicting opinions. Eratosthenes, he says, maintained that 'the aim of the poet always

is to charm the mind not to instruct.'<sup>1</sup> He himself holds with the ancients 'that poetry is a kind of elementary philosophy, which introduces us early to life, and gives us pleasurable instruction in reference to character, emotion, action.'<sup>2</sup> The Greek states, he argues, prescribed poetry as the first lesson of childhood; they did so, surely, not merely in order to please, but to afford correction in morals.<sup>3</sup> In carrying the same discipline into mature years they expressed their conviction, that poetry as a regulative influence on morals was adapted to every period of life. In course of time, he observes, philosophical and historical studies had been introduced, but these addressed themselves only to the few, while the appeal of poetry was to the masses.<sup>4</sup> Eratosthenes ought to have modified his phrase and said that the poet writes partly to please and partly to instruct, instead of which he converted poetry into a privileged *raconteuse* of old wives' fables, with no other object in view than to charm the mind.<sup>5</sup> If, however, poetry is the art which imitates life by the medium of speech, how can one be a poet who is senseless

<sup>1</sup> Strabo i. 2. 3, ποιητὴν γὰρ ἔφη πάντα στοχάζεσθαι ψυχαγωγίας οὐ διδασκαλίας.

<sup>2</sup> I.e. τοῦναντίον δ' οἱ παλαιοὶ φιλοσοφίαν τινὰ λέγουσι πρώτην τὴν ποιητικὴν εἰσάγουσαν εἰς τὸν βίον ἡμῶς ἐκ νέων καὶ διδάσκουσιν ἡθῆ καὶ πάθη καὶ πράξεις μεθ' ἡδονῆς.

<sup>3</sup> I.e. οὐ ψυχαγωγίας χάριν δῆπουθεν ψιλῆς ἀλλὰ σωφρονισμοῦ.

<sup>4</sup> Ib. i. 2. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Ib. i. 2. 3.

and ignorant of life? The excellence of a poet is not like that of a carpenter or a smith; it is bound up with that of the human being. No one can be a good poet who is not first a good man.<sup>1</sup>

This remarkable passage accurately reflects the sentiment which persisted to a late time in Greece, long after the strictly teaching functions of poetry had passed into other hands. It is to be met with everywhere in Plutarch. 'Poetry is the preparatory school of philosophy.'<sup>2</sup> 'It opens and awakens the youthful mind to the doctrines of philosophy.'<sup>3</sup> When first the young hear these doctrines they are bewildered and reject them. 'Before they pass from darkness into full sunshine they must dwell in a kind of twilight, in the soft rays of a truth that is blended with fiction, and so be prepared painlessly to face the blaze of philosophy without flinching.'<sup>4</sup> The novice requires wise guidance 'in order that through a schooling that brings no estrangement he may, as a kindly and

<sup>1</sup> Strabo i. 2. 5, ἡ δὲ ποιητοῦ [ἀρετὴ] συνέζευκται τῇ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, καὶ οὐχ οἷόν τε ἀγαθὸν γενέσθαι ποιητὴν μὴ πρότερον γενηθέντα ἄνδρα ἀγαθόν.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch *de Aud. Poet.* ch. 1, ἐν ποιήμασι προφιλοσοφητέον.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. ch. 14, ἔτι δὲ προανοίγει καὶ προκινεῖ τὴν τοῦ νέου ψυχὴν τοῖς ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ λόγοις.

<sup>4</sup> Ic. οὐδὲ ὑπομένοντας ἂν μὴ οἶον ἐκ σκότους πολλοῦ μέλλοντες ἡλίον ὄραν ἐθισθῶσι, καθάπερ ἐν νόθῳ φωτὶ καὶ κεκραμένης μύθοις ἀληθείας αὐγὴν ἔχοντι μαλθακὴν, ἀλύπως διαβλέπειν τὰ τοιαῦτα καὶ μὴ φεύγειν.

familiar friend, be conducted by poetry into the presence of philosophy.'<sup>1</sup>

How deeply the Greek mind was impressed with the moral office of the poet, is shown by the attitude which even Aristophanes feels constrained to take up in relation to his art. He proclaims that the comic poet not only ministers to the enjoyment of the community and educates their taste, he is also a moral teacher and political adviser.<sup>2</sup> 'Comedy too is acquainted with justice.'<sup>3</sup> It mixes earnest with its fun.<sup>4</sup> In the Parabasis of the *Acharnians* Aristophanes claims to be the best of poets for having had the courage to tell the Athenians what was right.<sup>5</sup> Good counsel he gives and will always give them; as for his satire it shall never light on what is honest and true.<sup>6</sup> He likens himself elsewhere to another Heracles, who attacks not ordinary human beings, but Cleons and other monsters of

<sup>1</sup> *l.c. ad fin.*, ἵνα μὴ προδιαβληθεὶς ἀλλὰ μάλλον προπαιδευθεὶς εὐμενὴς καὶ φίλος καὶ οἰκείος ὑπὸ ποιητικῆς ἐπὶ φιλοσοφίαν προπέμπηται.

<sup>2</sup> *Frogs* 1009-10, ὅτι βελτίους τε ποιοῦμεν  
τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν.

This claim is put into the mouth of Euripides.

<sup>3</sup> *Acharn.* 500, τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οἶδε καὶ τρυγφδία.

*Frogs* 686-7, τὸν ἱερὸν χορὸν δικάϊόν ἐστι χρηστὰ τῇ πόλει  
ἐυμπαινεῖν καὶ διδάσκειν.

<sup>4</sup> *Frogs* 389-90, καὶ πολλὰ μὲν γελοία μ' εἰ-  
πεῖν, πολλὰ δὲ σπουδαῖα.

<sup>5</sup> *Acharn.* 645, ὅστις παρεκινδύνευσ' εἰπεῖν ἐν Ἀθηναίοις τὰ  
δίκαια.

<sup>6</sup> *Acharn.* 656-8.

the earth, and who in ridding the city of such plagues deserves the title of 'cleanser of the land.'<sup>1</sup>

The censure he passes on Euripides is primarily a moral censure. Even where the judgment may seem to be of an aesthetic kind a moral motive underlies it. Euripides is to him a bad citizen and a bad poet. In him are embodied all the tendencies of the time which the older poet most abhors. He is the spirit of the age personified, with its restlessness, its scepticism, its sentimentalism, its unsparing questioning of old traditions, of religious usages and civic loyalty; its frivolous disputations, which unfit men for the practical work of life, its lowered ideal of courage and patriotism. Every phase of the sophistic spirit he discovers in Euripides. There is a bewildering dialectic which perplexes the moral sense. Duties whose appeal to the conscience is immediate, and which are recognised as having a binding force, are in Euripides subjected to analysis. Again, Euripides is censured for exciting feeling by any means that come to hand. When Dicaeopolis in the *Acharnians* is about to plead his case with his head on the block, he borrows from Euripides the rags and tatters of his hero Telephus. He carries off with him all the stage properties of woe, so that Euripides exclaims, 'My dear sir, you will rob me of my tragedy.'<sup>2</sup> Tragic pity,

<sup>1</sup> *Wasps* 1029-45.

<sup>2</sup> *Acharn.* 464 ἄνθρωπ', ἀφαιρήσει με τὴν τραγωδίαν.

Aristophanes implies, is debased in Euripides to an ignoble sentimentalism. Genuine misery does not consist in a beggar's rags or in a hobbling gait. Euripides substitutes the troubling of the senses for genuine tragic emotion.

We are not here concerned with the fairness of the criticism but only with the point of view of the critic; and the coincidence of the moral and aesthetic judgment in Aristophanes is especially noteworthy. He puts into the mouth of Aeschylus, his ideal tragedian, the saying that the poet is the instructor of grown men as the teacher is of youth;<sup>1</sup> and even the comic stage is, according to the theory if not the practice of Aristophanes, the school of the mature citizen.

Aristotle's treatment of poetry in the *Poetics* stands in complete contrast to this mode of criticism. In the *Politics* he had already dealt with the fine arts as they present themselves to the statesman and the social reformer. He allows that for childhood the use of poetry and music is to convey moral instruction, and that some forms of poetry, like some kinds of plastic art, exercise a

<sup>1</sup> *Frogs* 1054-5, τοῖς μὲν γὰρ παιδαρίοισιν  
ἔστι διδάσκαλος ὅστις φράζει, τοῖς ἡβώσιν δὲ ποιηταί.

Cf. Plato *Lys.* 213 E, ἥ δὲ ἐτράπημεν δοκεῖ μοι χρῆναι ἵεναι, σκοποῦντα κατὰ τοὺς ποιητάς· οὗτοι γὰρ ἡμῖν ὥσπερ πατέρες τῆς σοφίας εἰσὶ καὶ ἡγεμόνες.

*Laus* ix. 858 D, τῶν . . . ποιητῶν καὶ ὅσοι ἄνευ μέτρων καὶ μετὰ μέτρων τὴν αὐτῶν εἰς μνήμην ξυμβουλὴν περὶ βίου κατέθεντο.

dangerous influence on youth. But the true end of an art is not to be judged by the use to which it may be put in training immature minds. He tacitly combats the position of Plato who admits poetry to his commonwealth only so far as it is subsidiary to moral and political education, and who therefore excludes every form of it except hymns and chants and praises of great and good men, or what goes under the general name of didactic poetry. He distinguishes between educational use and aesthetic enjoyment. For the grown man the poet's function is not that of a teacher, or if a teacher he is so only by accident. The object of poetry, as of all the fine arts, is to produce an emotional delight, a pure and elevated pleasure. In the *Poetics* he writes as the literary critic and the historian of poetry. He is no longer concerned with fine art as an institution which the State recognises, and which should form part of an educational system. His inquiry is into the different forms of poetry,—their origin, their growth, the laws of their structure, their effect upon the mind. He analyses poetical compositions as he might the forms of thought. He seeks to discover what they are in themselves, and how they produce their distinctive effects. The didactic point of view is abandoned. We hear nothing of the ethical influence which the several kinds of poetry exert on the spectator or the reader, or of the moral intention of the poet.

In a passage of peculiar interest in ch. xxv. we read, 'The standard of correctness in poetry and politics is not the same, any more than in poetry and any other art.'<sup>1</sup> Aristotle had already insisted that poetical truth and scientific truth are not identical. Poetry is not a metrical version of the facts of medicine, natural science, or history.<sup>2</sup> It must be judged by its own laws, its own fundamental assumptions, and not by an alien standard. This observation is now extended to the relation of poetry and morality; for the comprehensive phrase 'politics' or 'political science' here, as often, has special reference to ethics. The observation is, doubtless, directed in particular against Plato, whose criticisms of poetry are mainly from the moral point of view. Plato, looking to the influence of poetry on the formation of character, condemned the tales of the gods,—their battles and dissensions: fictions they are, and immoral fictions.<sup>3</sup> So again the cruel and evil deeds ascribed to heroes and demigods are untrue—impious misstatements—and hurtful in their effect on the hearers.<sup>4</sup> Yet true or false—this is the rejoinder of Aristotle—these stories are currently

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxv. 3, οὐχ ἡ αὐτὴ ὁρθότης ἐστὶν τῆς πολιτικῆς καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς οὐδὲ ἄλλης τέχνης καὶ ποιητικῆς.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* i. 11, ix. 1–2.

<sup>3</sup> *Rep.* ii. 377 A—378 E.

<sup>4</sup> The βλαβερά of *Rep.* iii. 391 B is the βλαβερά of *Poet.* xxv. — 20; cf. *infra* p. 224 note.



told, they are the tradition of the people; as such they have their place in poetry.<sup>1</sup>

Again, personal satire had been condemned on moral grounds by Plato.<sup>2</sup> Aristotle agrees in this condemnation, but for a different reason. He ranks it as an inferior type of art not because it encourages low scandal or debases character, but because art ought to represent the general not the particular.<sup>3</sup> Neither in the definition of tragedy (ch. vi. 2), if properly understood, nor in the subsequent discussion of it, is there anything to lend countenance to the view that the office of tragedy is to work upon men's lives, and to make them better. The theatre is not the school. The character of the ideal tragic hero (ch. xiii.) is deduced not from any ethical ideal of conduct, but from the need of calling forth the blended emotions of pity and fear, wherein the proper tragic pleasure resides.<sup>4</sup> The catastrophe by which virtue is defeated and villainy in the end comes out triumphant is condemned by the same

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxv. 7. The supposed objection here is "οὐκ ἀληθῆ." These are Plato's very words in *Rep.* ii. 378 B (of the wars of the gods), οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀληθῆ: *Rep.* iii. 391 B (of Achilles dragging Hector round the tomb of Patroclus), ξίμπαντα ταῦτα οὐ φήσομεν ἀληθῆ εἰρησθαι, and 391 E (of other tales about the offspring of the gods), οὐθ' ὅσια ταῦτα οὐτ' ἀληθῆ. See also *supra* p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> *Laws* xi. 935 E, ποιητῇ δὴ κωμωδίας ἢ τινος ἰάμβων ἢ μουσῶν μελῳδίας μὴ ἐξέστω μήτε λόγῳ μήτε εἰκόνι μήτε θυμῷ μήτε ἀνευ θυμοῦ μηδαμῶς μηδένα τῶν πολιτῶν κωμωδεῖν.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* ix. 5.

<sup>4</sup> See *infra* ch. viii.

criterion;<sup>1</sup> and on a similar principle the prosaic justice, misnamed 'poetical,' which rewards the good man and punishes the wicked, is pronounced to be appropriate only to comedy.<sup>2</sup>

Aristotle's critical judgments on poetry rest on aesthetic and logical grounds, they take no account of ethical aims or tendencies. He mentions Euripides some twenty times in the *Poetics*, and in the great majority of instances with censure. He points out numerous defects, such as inartistic structure, bad character-drawing, a wrong part assigned to the chorus; but not a word is there of the immoral influence of which we hear so much in Aristophanes. In his praise as little as in his blame does Aristotle look to the moral content of a poem. Sophocles he admires not for the purity of his ethical teaching or for his deep religious intuitions, but for the unity which pervades the structure of his dramas, and the closely linked sequence of parts which work up to an inevitable end. Not that Aristotle would set aside as a matter of indifference the moral content of a poem or the moral character of the author. Nay, they are all-important factors in producing the total impression which has

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 8. Contrast Plato, who would compel the poet to exhibit the perfect requital of vice and virtue (*Laws* ii. 660 E). So in *Rep.* iii. 392 A-B poets are forbidden to say that many wicked men are happy and good men miserable, and are commanded to sing in an opposite strain.

to be made upon the hearer. Tragedy being the 'imitation of life,'<sup>1</sup> of human welfare and human misery, the pleasure it communicates could not conceivably be derived from a poem which misinterprets human destiny, and holds up low ideals of life and of conduct.<sup>2</sup>

In ch. xxv. 19 it is declared that the representation of moral depravity finds its only excuse in 'necessity.' The necessity meant is the inner necessity arising out of the structure of a piece. Vice in itself is undesirable even on the stage. But it may be subservient to the plot—one of those things ἀ βούλεται ὁ μῦθος—demanded by the cogent necessity of dramatic motive. Without it there may not be room for the proper play of contrasted character; for its effect upon the out-

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* vi. 9.

<sup>2</sup> In my first edition I took the passage *Poet.* xxv. 8, περὶ δὲ τοῦ καλῶς ἢ μὴ καλῶς ἢ εἰρηταί τινι ἢ πέπρακται, οὐ μόνον σκεπτέον εἰς αὐτὸ τὸ πεπραγμένον ἢ εἰρημένον βλέποντα κ.τ.λ., as referring to the morality of the poetic representation. But the arguments adduced by Mr. M. Carroll in his valuable Thesis *Aristotle's Poetics* c. xxv. in the *Light of the Homeric Scholia* (Baltimore, 1895), pp. 33–40, prove, I think, that there is an aesthetic not a moral reference here in περὶ δὲ τοῦ καλῶς ἢ μὴ καλῶς, and εἰ σπουδαῖον ἢ φαῦλον. 'Speech or action must be interpreted in the light of all the circumstances—the persons, the occasion, the end it is designed to serve; and if, from a study of these, the speech or action shows itself to be in accordance with necessity or probability, then its artistic excellence—and this is ever supreme with Aristotle—is assured. Morality enters into consideration only as implied in the aesthetic ideal.' See the quotations given from the Scholia with explanations of Aristotle, pp. 36 ff.

ward course of the incidents; in a word, for the due interaction of all the forces which lead to the catastrophe. Gratuitous wickedness is, however, forbidden: and as an instance of this fault, Menelaus in the *Orestes* of Euripides is cited here.<sup>1</sup> Nothing but the constraining needs of literary art are allowed to override the rules laid down for goodness of character in tragedy.

These rules, it must be owned, are too rigorous on their ethical side. It becomes the more necessary to call attention to them here, as we have dwelt with some emphasis on Aristotle's freedom from a narrowly moral, or moralistic, conception of poetry. This freedom, we now see, is subject to certain limitations. Traces of the older prepossession still survive, and linger around a portion of his doctrine.

In chapter ii. of the *Poetics* a broad distinction is drawn between the imitative arts, according as they represent persons morally noble (*σπουδαίους* opposed to *φαύλους*), ignoble, or of an intermediate type resembling average humanity (*ὁμοίους*). Some attempt has been made to empty the words *σπουδαίους* and *φαύλους*, and the synonymous expressions in the *Poetics* of any strictly moral content, and to reduce the antithesis to the aesthetic distinc-

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxv. 19, ὀρθὴ δ' ἐπιτίμησις . . . μοχθηρίᾳ, ὅταν μὴ ἀνάγκης οὐσης μὴθὲν χρῆσθται . . . τῇ πονηρίᾳ, ὥσπερ ἐν Ὀρέστῃ τοῦ Μενελάου. Cf. xv. 5. Such a representation would be included under the βλαβερά of xxv. 20.

tion between ideal and vulgar characters. It is indeed true that *σπουδαῖος*—serving as the adjective of *ἀρετή* in its widest acceptance,<sup>1</sup> as does *φαῦλος* of *κακία*—can denote any one that is good or excellent in his kind or in his special line. Similarly, and with like freedom, it can be applied to any object, animate or inanimate.<sup>2</sup> In its reference to a person, the particular sphere of his excellence is expressed by a limiting phrase or adverbial addition (*σπουδαῖος τι* or *περί τι*), or by the agreement of the adjective with some noun indicating the range of its application (*σπουδαῖος νομοθέτης, καθαριστής* and the like).<sup>3</sup> But when the word is used as the epithet of a man as such, without any qualifying reference to occupation, profession, or function, we must take it to mean morally 'good.'<sup>4</sup> Aristotle seems bent on making it plain, here at the outset, that the ethical sense is that which he intends. The parenthetic remark in § 1 shows that the comprehensive

<sup>1</sup> *Categ.* 6. 10 b 7, οἷον ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς ὁ σπουδαῖος· τῷ γὰρ ἀρετὴν ἔχειν σπουδαῖος λέγεται, ἀλλ' οὐ παρωνύμως ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς: that is, there is no adjective formed from the noun ἀρετή: σπουδαῖος does duty for it. Cf. *Top.* v. 3. 131 b 2, where the ἴδιον ἀρετῆς is ὁ τὸν ἔχοντα ποιεῖ σπουδαῖον.

<sup>2</sup> In *Poet.* v. 5, τραγῳδίας σπουδαίας καὶ φαύλης is 'good or bad tragedy' in the purely aesthetic sense.

<sup>3</sup> e.g. *Nic. Eth.* i. 6. 1098 a 11, καθαριστοῦ μὲν γὰρ τὸ καθαρίζειν, σπουδαῖον δὲ τὸ εὖ.

<sup>4</sup> *Nic. Eth.* ix. 4. 1166 a 12, εἵκει γὰρ . . . μέτρον ἐκάστῳ ἡ ἀρετὴ καὶ ὁ σπουδαῖος εἶναι. x. 6. 1176 b 25, καὶ τίμια καὶ ἡδέα ἐστὶ τὰ τῷ σπουδαίῳ τοιαῦτα ὄντα. So *passim*.

ideas summed up in *ἀρετή* and *κακία* as applied to morals, are covered by the contrasted terms *σπουδαίους* and *φαύλους*.<sup>1</sup> After illustrations drawn from various forms of art, the chapter ends with the statement that 'comedy aims at representing men as worse, tragedy as better than in actual life.'<sup>2</sup> Consistent herewith is the observation in ch. v. 4, that epic poetry agrees with tragedy as being a *μίμησις σπουδαίων*: and again the requirement of ch. xv. that the characters (*ἦθη*) shall be *χρηστά*,<sup>3</sup>—once more 'good' in the ethical sense, and barely to be distinguished from *σπουδαία*.

Aristotle, then, starts from what was, so far as we know, the unquestioned assumption of his time,—that the primary distinction between higher and lower forms of art depended on the different types of moral character represented by them. The

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ii. 1, *σπουδαίους ἢ φαύλους εἶναι* (τὰ γὰρ ἦθη σχεδὸν ἀεὶ τοῖτοις ἀκολουθεῖ μόνοις, κακία γὰρ καὶ ἀρετὴ τὰ ἦθη διαφέρουσι πάντες).

<sup>2</sup> Is the *βούλεται* here a limiting expression, leaving room for the admission under certain circumstances of a vicious character in tragedy? Cf. *πειράται* in v. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Not 'well marked'—the impossible interpretation put upon it by Dacier, Bossu, Metastasio, and others—nor, in a merely aesthetic sense, 'elevated.' The moral meaning is here again not to be evaded. So in xv. 1 a *χρηστὸν ἦθος* depends on a *χρηστὴ προαίρεσις*, which is equivalent to *σπουδαία προαίρεσις* of *Nic. Eth.* vi. 2. 1139 a 25, and *ἐπιεικὴς προαίρεσις* of *Nic. Eth.* vii. 11. 1152 a 17. In xv. 8 *ἐπιεικὴς* is not perceptibly different from the preceding *χρηστός*.

same view is reflected everywhere in Plato. In the *Laws* the taste of the judges (*κριταί*) at the theatrical competitions is commented on adversely. They ought to be the instructors, they are the mere disciples of the theatre. Their influence reacts upon the poets. Consequently the audience 'when they ought to be hearing of characters morally better than their own, and receiving a higher pleasure, are affected in an entirely opposite manner.'<sup>1</sup> Again the objects that music 'imitates' are 'the characters of men better or worse,'<sup>2</sup>—a distinction verbally the same as in the *Poetics* ch. ii.

Yet Aristotle, while using the traditional phrases, is feeling after some more satisfactory and vital distinction. The very instances he adduces to illustrate his meaning show that the moral formula is strained to the point of breaking. The characters of Homer (§ 5) are 'better' (*βελτίους*) than those of ordinary reality, or than those who figure in epic parody, not solely or chiefly through a superior virtue, but by powers of willing and feeling, doing and thinking, which raise them above the common herd of men. The example drawn from painting suggests a like conclusion.

<sup>1</sup> *Laws* ii. 659 C, δέον γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἀεὶ βελτίω τῶν αὐτῶν ἡθῶν ἀκούοντας βελτίω τὴν ἡδονὴν ἰσχεῖν, νῦν αὐτοῖς δρῶσι πᾶν τοῦναντίον ξυμβαίνει.

<sup>2</sup> *Laws* vii. 798 D, τὰ περὶ τοὺς ῥυθμοὺς καὶ πᾶσαν μουσικὴν ἔστι τρόπων μιμήματα βελτιόνων καὶ χειρόνων ἀνθρώπων.

Three contemporary painters of an earlier date are mentioned, each typical of a certain mode of artistic treatment. 'Polygnotus depicted men as nobler (κρείττους) than they are, Pauson as less noble (χείρους), Dionysius drew them true to life (ὁμοίους).'<sup>1</sup> Evidently these differences do not correspond to purely ethical distinctions. Roughly we may say that idealistic treatment is exemplified in Polygnotus, realistic in Dionysius, and the tendency to caricature in Pauson. His own examples might have led Aristotle to discard the moral formula, and to seek elsewhere the differentiating marks of artistic representation. As it is, his precise thought is not difficult to discover. Obviously, a perfect art does not, in his view, imply characters of faultless virtue. The sketch of the ideal tragic hero in ch. xiii. 3-4 itself precludes such a notion. Another decisive passage is ch. xv. 8. Defective characters—those, for instance, who are irascible or indolent (ὀργίλοι καὶ ῥάθυμοι)—may be ennobled (ἐπιεικεῖς ποιεῖν) by poetic treatment. One of the examples given is the Achilles of Homer, whose leading defect is a passionate temperament, and who would,

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ii. 2. Here Polygnotus is spoken of as a portrayer of good ἦθη, in vi. 11 he is a good portrayer of ἦθη, ἀγαθὸς ἡθογράφος, as opposed to Zeuxis. Cf. *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1340 a 36, δεῖ μὴ τὰ Παύωνος θεωρεῖν τοὺς νέους, ἀλλὰ τὰ Πολυγνώτου κἂν εἴ τις ἄλλος τῶν γραφέων ἢ τῶν ἀγαλματοποιῶν ἐστὶν ἡθικός.



doubtless, be placed among the *ὀργίλοι*.<sup>1</sup> Such a character, poetically idealised, conforms to the conditions of goodness (*χρηστὰ ἦθη*) prescribed in this chapter. Even without these express indications we might draw some such inference from a comparison of the phrase *μίμησις σπουδαίων* (ch. v. 4) applied to epic and tragic poetry—with the description of comedy in ch. v. 1 as a *μίμησις φαυλοτέρων μὲν, οὐ μέντοι κατὰ πᾶσαν κακίαν*, ‘an imitation of characters of a lower type, not however, in the full sense of the word, bad.’ The badness which comedy delineates is not coextensive with moral badness. It is explained to be that specific form of badness which consists in an ugliness or deformity of character that is ludicrous. A similar qualification of the kind of goodness that is required in the higher forms of poetry, might naturally be inferred. The phrase *μίμησις σπουδαίων* would thus imply a restrictive clause, *οὐ μέντοι κατὰ πᾶσαν ἀρετήν*, ‘but not, in the full sense of the word, good.’ This missing qualification is, however, partly supplied by the passages of ch. xiii. and ch. xv. above referred to.

The result, then, arrived at is briefly this. According to Aristotle, the characters portrayed by epic and tragic poetry have their basis in moral

<sup>1</sup> See Bywater *Journal of Philology*, xiv. 27, p. 48. The words *παράδειγμα σκληρότητος* are rightly, I think, bracketed by

goodness ; but the goodness is of the heroic order.  
It is quite distinct from plain, unaspiring virtue.  
It has nothing in it common or mean. Whatever  
 be the moral imperfections in the characters, they  
 are such as impress our imagination, and arouse  
 the sense of grandeur: we are lifted above the  
 reality of daily life. To go farther would be to part  
 company with Aristotle: he would hardly allow that  
 there may be a dignity, an elevation of character,  
 which saves even vice from being contemptible,  
 and brings it under the higher requirements of  
 art. Had he wished to mark the distinctively  
 aesthetic quality of characters grand or elevated,  
 he might have used such expressions as μέγα τι,  
 or οὐδὲν φαῦλον, or οὐδὲν ἀγεννὲς πράττειν (φρονεῖν).

The grandeur, however, which he demands is a  
 moral grandeur. Greatness cannot take the place  
 of goodness. Satan, though he were never 'less  
 than archangel ruined,' is not, under Aristotelian  
 rules, a fitting character for an epic poem.

Aristotle, in respect to the delineation of  
 character, is still on the border-land between morals  
 and aesthetics. Mere goodness does not satisfy  
 him: something, he feels, must be infused into  
 it which does not belong to the prosaic world.  
 But what that is, he does not tell us. He has no  
 adequate perception of the wide difference that  
 separates moral and poetical excellence of character.  
 When he comes to define tragedy, he makes, it

would appear, a step in advance, though at the cost of logical consistency. In the definition given in ch. vi., tragedy no longer *μμεῖται σπουδαίους* but is a *μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας*. Here there seems to be a transition to a different sense of the word *σπουδαίος*. Logically, it ought, no doubt, to bear the same meaning—‘good,’ ‘noble’—as applied to the tragic action, that it bore in the previous divisions of poetry as applied to the persons whom tragedy represents.<sup>1</sup> But Aristotle imperceptibly glides into the meaning ‘serious,’ ‘elevated,’ ‘grand,’—a meaning which the word readily admits of in reference to a *thing*, such as a *πρᾶξις*, though it could not be so used of a *person* without the addition of other words or of a qualifying context. This new shade of meaning, which enters into the definition, is required in order to differentiate the tragic action from the *γελοία πρᾶξις* of Comedy.<sup>2</sup> Aristotle passes lightly from *μμεῖται σπουδαίους* to *μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας*, as if the one expression were merely the equivalent of the other. He can hardly have realised the important bearings of the change by which the word *σπουδαίος* is freed from the limited moral reference which attaches to it in ch. ii. Had he followed out in his observations upon character (τὰ

<sup>1</sup> Mr. R. P. Hardie in *Mind*, vol. iv. No. 15, argues that this meaning must be retained in the definition.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 237.

ἥθη) in ch. xv. the line of thought which the adjective here suggests as applied to the tragic action, he might have made a notable improvement on his aesthetic theory. In pursuance of this idea, tragedy would have demanded not mere goodness of character (χρηστὰ ἥθη), but a greatness or elevation corresponding to the grandeur of the action.

Before we dismiss the phrase *μίμησις σπουδαίων*, we may for a moment glance aside to notice one curious chapter in its history. The French critics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries generally took *σπουδαῖοι* to mean persons of high rank. So strange a perversion of language is hardly credible, and yet it admits of easy explanation. A Roman rule, itself founded on Greek writers subsequent to Aristotle, had prescribed that the fundamental difference between tragedy and comedy is to be sought in the fact, that kings and heroes are the actors in tragedy, ordinary citizens in comedy.<sup>1</sup> This purely outward distinction had won acceptance with many distinguished scholars. When the *Poetics* came to be received as the guide and canon of

<sup>1</sup> The grammarian Diomedes says: 'Tragoedia est heroicae fortunae in adversis comprehensio, a Theophrasto ita definita est, τραγῳδία ἐστὶν ἡρωϊκῆς τύχης περίστασις. . . . Comoedia est privatae civilisque fortunae sine periculo vitae comprehensio, apud Graecos ita definita, κωμῳδία ἐστὶν ἰδιωτικῶν πραγμάτων ἀκίνδυνος περὶοχή. . . . Comoedia a tragoedia differt, quod in tragoedia heroes, duces, reges, in comoedia humiles atque privatae personae.'

criticism in France, Aristotelian authority was eagerly sought for this among other literary traditions. With an entire disregard of linguistic usage, the phrase *μίμησις σπουδαίων* was—in default of any other—seized on as affording the desired sanction. The Abbé D'Aubignac in his book *La Pratique du Théâtre*, which long continued to be the text-book of French dramatic writers, declares that 'tragedy represents the life of princes,' while 'comedy serves to depict the actions of the people.'<sup>1</sup> Dacier goes even to greater lengths in his note on *μίμησις σπουδαίων*. 'It is not necessary,' he says, 'that the action which affords matter for an Epic poem, be illustrious and important in itself; on the contrary, it may be very ordinary or common; but it must be so, by the quality of the persons who act. Thus Horace says plainly, "Res gestae regumque ducumque." This is so true that the most notable action of a citizen can never be made the subject of an epic poem, when the most indifferent one of a king or general of an army will be such, and always with success.'<sup>2</sup> In all this misapprehen-

<sup>1</sup> *La Pratique du Théâtre* bk. ii. ch. 10, 'La Tragédie représentoit la vie des Princes.' . . . 'La Comédie servoit à dépeindre les actions du peuple.'

<sup>2</sup> Dacier on *Poet.* v. 4, note 17 (Trans. London 1705). Cf. note 9 on ch. xiii., 'Tragedy, as Epic poem, does not require that the action which it represents should be great and important in itself. It is sufficient that it be tragical, the names of the persons are sufficient to render it magnificent; which for that very reason

sion there is just one grain of solid fact. Aristotle does undoubtedly hold that the chief actors in tragedy ought to be illustrious by birth and position. The narrow and trivial life of obscure persons cannot give scope for a great and significant action, one of tragic consequence. But nowhere does he make outward rank the distinguishing feature of tragic as opposed to comic representation. Moral nobility is what he demands; and this—on the French stage, or at least with French critics—is transformed into an inflated dignity, a courtly etiquette and decorum, which seemed proper to high rank. The instance is one of many in which literary critics have wholly confounded the teaching of Aristotle.

But to return from this digression. Aristotle, as our inquiry has shown, was the first who attempted to separate the theory of aesthetics from that of morals. He maintains consistently that the end of poetry is a refined pleasure. In doing so he severs himself decisively from the older didactic tendency of Greece. But in describing the means to the end, he does not altogether cast off the earlier influence. The aesthetic representation of character he views under ethical lights, and the different types of character he reduces to

are all taken from those of the greatest fortune and reputation. The greatness of these eminent men renders the action great, and their reputation makes it credible and possible.'

moral categories. Still he never allows the moral purpose of the poet or the moral effects of his art to take the place of the artistic end. If the poet fails to produce the proper pleasure, he fails in the specific function of his art. He may be good as a teacher, but as a poet or artist he is bad.

Few of Aristotle's successors followed out this way of thinking; and the prevailing Greek tradition that the primary office of poetry is to convey ethical teaching was carried on through the schools of Greek rhetoric till it was firmly established in the Roman world. The Aristotelian doctrine as it has been handed down to modern times has again in this instance often taken the tinge of Roman thought, and been made to combine in equal measure the *utile* with the *dulce*. Sir Philip Sidney, for example, who in his *Apology for Poetry* repeatedly states that the end of poetry is 'delightful teaching,' or 'to teach and to delight,' has no suspicion that he is following the *Ars Poetica* of Horace rather than that of Aristotle. The view of Sidney was that of the Elizabethan age in general. It was a new departure when Dryden wrote in the spirit of Aristotle: 'I am satisfied if it [verse] cause delight; for delight is the chief if not the only end of poesy: instruction can be admitted but in the second place, for poesy only instructs as it delights.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Defence of an Essay of Dramatic Poetry.*

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FUNCTION OF TRAGEDY

ARISTOTLE's definition of tragedy<sup>1</sup> runs thus :—

‘Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper *katharsis*, or purgation, of these<sup>2</sup> emotions.’

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* vi. 2, ἔστιν οὖν τραγῳδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας καὶ τελείας μέγεθος ἐχούσης, ἡδυσμένη λόγῳ χωρὶς ἐκάστῳ (codd. ἐκάστου) τῶν εἰδῶν ἐν τοῖς μορίοις, δρώντων καὶ οὐ δι' ἀπαγγελίας, δι' ἐλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν.

<sup>2</sup> τῶν τοιούτων has given rise to much misunderstanding. It is not ‘all such emotions’ or ‘these and suchlike emotions,’ but by a frequent and idiomatic use ‘the aforesaid emotions,’ namely, pity and fear. It is with these, and these only, that tragedy is concerned throughout the *Poetics*. There is probably, as Reinkens (p. 161) says, a delicate reason here for the preference of τῶν τοιούτων over the demonstrative. The ἔλεος and φόβος of the definition, as will be evident in the sequel, are the aesthetic emotions of pity and fear, those which are awakened by the tragic representation. τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων are the emotions of pity and fear which belong to real life. The use of τούτων instead of τοιούτων might have suggested that the feelings were identically the same.



The 'several kinds of embellishment' are in the next paragraph explained to be verse and song; verse without music being employed in the dialogue, lyrical song in the choral parts. Tragedy is hereby distinguished from Nomic and Dithyrambic poetry, which use the combined embellishments throughout.<sup>1</sup>

From this definition it appears first, that the *genus* of tragedy is Imitation. This it has in common with all the fine arts.

Next, it is differentiated from comedy as being a *μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας*, an imitation of an action that is neither *γελοία* nor *φαύλη*, neither ludicrous nor morally trivial. It is concerned with a serious end, namely *εὐδαιμονία*,<sup>2</sup>—that well-being which is the true end of life. It is a picture of human destiny in all its significance. No one English word completely renders *σπουδαίας*. The translation 'noble,' which has the merit of applying to the characters as well as to the action, yet suggests too much a purely moral quality, while at the same time it does not adequately bring out the implied antithesis to comedy. *Grave* and *great*—these are the two ideas contained in the word. Many of the older critics, missing the true import of *σπουδαίας*, transfer the meaning which they ought to have found here to the later words, *μέγεθος* *ἐχούσης*, of the definition. These—as is plain from

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Poet.* i. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* vi. 9.

Aristotle's explanation in ch. vii.—refer to the actual length of the poem. Addison,<sup>1</sup> who does not stand alone in this view, includes under them the greatness or significance of the action (which is in fact denoted by *σπουδαίας*) and also the internal length or duration of the action, of which Aristotle here says nothing.

Further, tragedy is differentiated in form from Epic poetry as being dramatic, not narrative.

The remainder of the definition describes the specific effect, the proper function (*ἔργον*) of tragedy,—namely, to produce a certain kind of *katharsis*. It would be a curious study to collect the many and strange translations that have been given of this definition in the last three hundred years. Almost every word of it has been misinterpreted in one way or another. But after all it contains only two real difficulties. The one lies in the clause concerning the 'several kinds of embellishment.' Fortunately, however, Aristotle has interpreted this for us himself; otherwise it would doubtless have called forth volumes of criticism. The other and more fundamental difficulty relates to the meaning of the *katharsis*.<sup>2</sup> Here

<sup>1</sup> *Spectator* No. 267: 'Aristotle by the greatness of the action does not only mean that it should be great in its nature but also in its duration, or in other words that it should have a due length in it, as well as what we properly call greatness.'

<sup>2</sup> Since the first edition of this book was published, a complete account of the uses of the word *κάθαρσις* has been given by

we seek in vain for any direct aid from the *Poetics*.

A great historic discussion has centred round the phrase. No passage, probably, in ancient literature has been so frequently handled by commentators, critics, and poets, by men who knew Greek, and by men who knew no Greek. A tradition almost unbroken through centuries found in it a reference to (a moral effect) which tragedy produces through the 'purification of the passions.' What the precise effect is, and what are the passions on which tragedy works, was very variously interpreted. Corneille, Racine,<sup>1</sup> Lessing,

Susemihl and Hicks (*Politics of Aristotle*) in a valuable note, pp. 641-656, '*κάθαρσις* as an aesthetic term' being treated pp. 650 ff. In a few details the explanation of the word in its reference to tragedy differs from what will be found in the following pages, but I have not seen reason to alter what had been written.

<sup>1</sup> Racine states his own purpose as a dramatic writer in the Preface to *Phèdre*: 'Ce que je puis assurer c'est que je n'en ai point fait où la vertu soit plus mise en jour que dans celle-ci ; les moindres fautes y sont sévèrement punies : la seule pensée du crime y est regardée avec autant d'horreur que le crime même ; les faiblesses de l'amour y passent pour de vraies faiblesses. Les passions n'y sont présentées aux yeux que pour montrer tout le désordre dont elles sont cause ; et le vice y est peint partout avec des couleurs qui en font connaître et haïr la difformité. C'est là proprement le but que tout homme qui travaille pour le public doit se proposer ; et c'est ce que les premiers poètes tragiques avaient en vue sur toute chose. Leur théâtre était une école où la vertu n'était pas moins bien enseignée que dans les écoles des philosophes. Aussi Aristote a bien voulu donner des règles du poème dramatique ; et Socrate, le plus sage des philosophes, ne dédaignait pas de mettre la main aux tragédies d'Euripide. Il serait à souhaiter que nos

each offered different solutions, but all agreed in assuming the purely ethical intention of the drama. Goethe protested; but his own most interesting theory<sup>1</sup> is for linguistic reasons quite impossible, nor does it accord with much else that is contained in the *Poetics*. In 1857 a pamphlet by Jacob Bernays<sup>2</sup> reopened the whole question, and gave a new direction to the argument. His main ideas had been forestalled by one or two earlier critics, but it had never been fully worked out and had hitherto attracted but little notice.

Bernays, with equal learning and literary skill, maintained that *katharsis* here is a medical metaphor,<sup>3</sup> 'purgation,' and denotes a pathological effect

ouvrages fussent aussi solides et aussi pleins d'utiles instructions que ceux de ces poètes.'

<sup>1</sup> Published in *Nachlese zu Aristoteles Poetik*, 1826. His translation of the definition is worth recording, if only for its errors. 'Die Tragödie ist die Nachahmung einer bedeutenden und abgeschlossenen Handlung, die eine gewisse Ausdehnung hat und in anmuthiger Sprache vorgetragen wird, und zwar von abgesonderten Gestalten, deren jede ihre eigene Rolle spielt, und nicht erzählungsweise von einem Einzelnen; nach einem Verlauf aber von Mitleid und Furcht, mit Ausgleichung solcher Leidenschaften ihr Geschäft abschließt.' The εἶδη of the definition here become the dramatic characters and the μέρη are the parts they play!

<sup>2</sup> Republished in 1880 in the volume *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Aristotelische Theorie des Drama* (Berlin).

<sup>3</sup> The three chief meanings of the word, (1) the medical, (2) the religious or liturgical, 'lustratio' or 'expiatio,' and (3) the moral, 'purificatio,' are sometimes difficult to keep apart. In Plato *Soph.* 230 C the medical metaphor is prominent. Refutation (ἐλεγχος) is a mode of κάθαρσις. Before knowledge can be im-

in the soul analogous to the effect of medicine on the body. The thought, as he interpreted it, may be expressed thus. Tragedy excites the emotions of pity and fear—kindred emotions that are in the recesses of all men—and by the act of excitation affords a pleasurable relief. The feelings called forth by the tragic spectacle are not indeed permanently removed, but are quieted for the time, so that the system can fall back upon its normal course. The stage, in fact, provides a harmless and pleasurable outlet for instincts which demand satisfaction, and which can be indulged here more harmlessly than in real life.

Plato, it must be remembered, in his attack upon the drama had said that 'the natural hunger for sorrow and weeping' which is kept under control in our own calamities, is satisfied and allayed by the poets.<sup>1</sup> 'Poetry feeds and waters

erected internal obstacles must be removed (τὰ ἐμποδίζοντα ἐκκαλεῖν). In *Crat.* 405 A doctors and soothsayers both use ἡ ἰατροῖς καὶ οἱ καθαρμοί. In *Phaedo* 69 C the medical sense of ἰατροῖς shades off into the religious, the transition being effected by the mention of καθαρός.

<sup>1</sup> *Rep.* x. 606 A, τὸ βίᾳ κατεχόμενον τότε ἐν ταῖς οἰκείαις ἡμφοραῖς καὶ πεπεινηκὸς τοῦ δακρύσαι τε καὶ ἀποδύρασθαι ἀνῶς καὶ ἀποπλησθῆναι, φύσει δὲ τοιοῦτον οἶον τούτων ἰθυμῆν, τότε ἔστι τοῦτο τὸ ὑπὸ τῶν ποιητῶν πιμπλάμενον ἢ χαίρον. Cf. 606 B, λογίζεσθαι γάρ, οἶμαι, ὀλίγοις τιῶν ἴσασιν, ὅτι ἀπολαύειν ἀνάγκη ἀπὸ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων εἰς τὰ οἰκεία. κῆφοντα γὰρ ἐν ἐκείνοις ἰσχυρὸν τὸ ἐλεεινὸν οὐ βῆδον ἐν τοῖς ἡμῶν πάθεσι κατέχειν.

the passions instead of starving them.'<sup>1</sup> Through its tearful moods it enfeebles the manly temper; it makes anarchy in the soul by exalting the lower elements over the higher, and by dethroning reason in favour of feeling. Aristotle held that it is not desirable to kill or to starve the emotional part of the soul, and that the regulated indulgence of the feelings serves to maintain the balance of our nature. Tragedy, he would say, is a vent for the particular emotions of pity and fear. In the first instance, it is true, its effect is not to tranquillise but to excite. It excites emotion, however, only to allay it. Pity and fear, artificially stirred, expel the latent pity and fear which we bring with us from real life, or at least, such elements in them as are disquieting. In the pleasurable calm which follows when the passion is spent, an emotional cure has been wrought.<sup>2</sup>

It is worth noting, as has been pointed out by Bernays, and before him by Twining, that Milton, with the intuition at once of a poet and a scholar,

<sup>1</sup> *Rep.* x. 606 D, *τρέφει γὰρ ταῦτα ἄρδουσα, δέον αὐχμεῖν.*

<sup>2</sup> Zeller (*Phil. der Gr.*) thinks it unimportant whether the medical or the religious use of the *katharsis* is primarily intended, as in either case the word bears a sense far removed from the original metaphor. But the distinctive method of relief is different in the two cases. The medical *katharsis* implies relief following upon previous excitation. There is first a *ταραχή* or *κίνησις*, then *κάθαρσις* or *ἐκκρίσις*. This is of vital moment for the argument. If we lose sight of the metaphor, the significance of the process is missed.

apprehended something of the true import of Aristotle's words. In his preface to *Samson Agonistes* he writes :

'Tragedy, as it was anciently composed, hath been ever held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other poems ; therefore said by Aristotle to be of power, by raising pity and fear, or terrour, to purge the mind of those and such-like passions ; that is to temper or reduce them to just measure with a kind of delight stirred up by reading or seeing those passages well imitated. Nor is Nature herself wanting in her own efforts to make good his assertion, for so, in physick, things of melancholick hue and quality are used against melancholy, sour against sour, salt to remove salt humours.' In other words tragedy is a form of homoeopathic treatment, curing emotion by means of an emotion like in kind, but not identical.<sup>1</sup>

Aristotle, it would seem, was led to this remarkable theory by observing the effect of certain melodies upon a form of religious ecstasy, or, as the Greeks said, 'enthusiasm,' such as is rarely seen in this country, and whose proper home is in the East. The persons subject to such transports were

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the closing lines of *Samson Agonistes* :

His servants he, with new acquist  
Of true experience, from this great event  
With peace and consolation hath dismissed,  
And calm of mind, all passion spent.

regarded as men possessed by a god, and were taken under the care of the priesthood. The treatment prescribed for them was so far homoeopathic in character, that it consisted in applying movement to cure movement, in soothing the internal trouble of the mind by a wild and restless music. The passage in the *Politics*<sup>1</sup> in which Aristotle describes the operation of these tumultuous melodies is the key to the meaning of *katharsis* in the *Poetics*. Such music is expressly distinguished by Aristotle from the music which has a moral effect or educational value (*παιδείας ἕνεκεν*). It differs, again, from those forms of music whose end is either relaxation (*πρὸς ἀνάπαυσιν*) or the higher aesthetic enjoyment (*πρὸς διαγωγὴν*).<sup>2</sup> Its object is *katharsis*. It is a physical stimulus, which provides an outlet for religious fervour.

<sup>1</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 7. 1341 b 32—1342 a 15. For *ἐνθουσιασμός* as a morbid state to be cured by music see Aristides Quintilianus (*circa* 100 A.D.) *περὶ μουσικῆς* ii. p. 157, quoted and explained in Döring p. 332, cf. p. 261. There the healing process is denoted by *καταστέλλεσθαι, ἀπομειλίττεσθαι, ἐκκαθαίρεσθαι*. The music employed is called a *μίμησις τις* (i.e. of the enthusiasm), which shows that the musical *κάθαρσις* is a kind of homoeopathic cure.

<sup>2</sup> Susemihl (*Politics*, Excurs. v. 638) maintains that *κάθαρσις* is not a distinct end of music, but a means either to *διαγωγή* or *ἀνάπαυσις*, and would alter the text of 1341 b 40 accordingly. I hold with Zeller (*Phil. der Gr.*) that a comparison of the two passages *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1339 b 11, and 7. 1341 b 36 leads to the conclusion that Aristotle recognises four different uses of music, as stated above.



Patients, who have been subjected to this process, 'fall back,' to quote Aristotle's phrase, 'into their normal state, as if they had undergone a medical or purgative treatment.'<sup>1</sup> The emotional result is a 'harmless joy.'<sup>2</sup>

The homoeopathic cure of morbid 'enthusiasm' by means of music, was, it may be incidentally observed, known also to Plato. In a passage of the *Laws*,<sup>3</sup> where he is laying down rules for the management of infants, his advice is that infants should be kept in perpetual motion, and live as if they were always tossing at sea. He proceeds to compare the principle on which religious ecstasy is cured by a strain of impassioned music, with the method of nurses, who lull their babies to sleep

<sup>1</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 7. 1342 a 10, καθισταμένους ὥσπερ ἰατρείας πυρόντας καὶ καθάρσεως. The ὥσπερ marks the introduction of the metaphor: ἰατρεία is explained by the more specific term κάθαρσις. καθίστασθαι is also a *verb. prop.* in medicine, either of the patient relapsing into his natural state or of the disease settling down (cf. Döring p. 328). In the same passage of the *Politics* 1342 a 14 the medical metaphor is kept up in κουφίζεσθαι ('obtain relief') μεθ' ἡδονῆς.

<sup>2</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 7. 1342 a 15, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ μέλη τὰ καθαρτικὰ παρέχει χαρὰν ἀβλαβῇ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. Susemihl here accepts Sauppe's emendation πρακτικὰ for καθαρτικὰ (see note ad loc.). But the text may well stand if we regard 1342 a 11-15 (ταῦτ' δὲ τοῦτο . . . κουφίζεσθαι μεθ' ἡδονῆς) as parenthetical, and alluding not to the musical κάθαρσις but to the κάθαρσις of ἔλεος and φόβος in tragedy. Then the words ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ μέλη τὰ καθ. mark the return to the musical κάθαρσις. For the phrase ἀβλαβῆς ἡδονή see supra, p. 203, and *Nic. Eth.* vii. 14. 1154 b 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Laws* vii. 790-1.

not by silence but by singing, not by holding them quiet but by rocking them in their arms. Fear, he thinks, is in each case the emotion that has to be subdued,—a fear caused by something that has gone wrong within. In each case the method of cure is the same; an external agitation (κίνησις) is employed to calm and counteract an internal

But Plato recognised the principle only as it applied to music and to the useful art of nursing. Aristotle, with his generalising faculty and his love of discovering unity in different domains of life, extended the principle to tragedy, and hints at even a wider application of it. In the *Politics*, after explaining the action of the musical *katharsis*, he adds that ‘those who are liable to pity and fear, and, in general, persons of emotional temperament pass through a like experience; . . . they all undergo a *katharsis* of some kind and feel a pleasurable relief.’<sup>1</sup>

The whole passage of the *Politics* here referred to is introduced by certain important prefatory

<sup>1</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 7. 1342 a 11, ταὐτὸ δὲ τοῦτο ἀναγκαῖον πάσχειν καὶ τοὺς ἐλεήμονας καὶ τοὺς φοβητικούς καὶ τοὺς ὅλως παθητικούς, . . . καὶ πᾶσι γίγνεσθαι τινα κάθαρσιν καὶ κουφίεσθαι μεθ’ ἡδονῆς. Here *τινα κάθαρσιν* implies that the *katharsis* in all cases is not precisely of the same kind. Hence we see the force of the article in the definition of tragedy, τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν, the *specific katharsis*, that which is appropriate to these emotions. There is nothing in the *Poetics* to bear out the assumption of many commentators that epic poetry excites precisely the same emotions as tragedy.

words: 'What we mean by *katharsis* we will now state in general terms (*ἀπλῶς*); hereafter we will explain it more clearly (*ἐροῦμεν σαφέστερον*) in our treatise on Poetry.'<sup>1</sup> But in the *Poetics*, as we have it, the much desired explanation is wanting; there appears to be a gap in the text at this most critical point. We are therefore driven back upon the *Politics* itself as our primary authority. The tone of the passage and particular expressions show two things plainly—first, that the term there is consciously metaphorical; secondly, that though its technical use in medicine was familiar, the metaphorical application of it was novel, and needed elucidation. Moreover, in the words last quoted, —'all undergo a *katharsis* of some kind,'—it is pretty plainly implied that the *katharsis* of pity and fear in tragedy is analogous to, but not identical with, the *katharsis* of 'enthusiasm.'

Now, Bernays transferred the *katharsis* of the *Politics* almost without modification of meaning to the definition of tragedy. He limited its reference to the simple idea of an emotional relief, a pleasurable vent for overcharged feeling.<sup>2</sup> This idea, no

<sup>1</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 7. 1341 b 39.

<sup>2</sup> Keble's theory of poetry—of the '*vis medica poeticae*,' as he calls it—deserves to be compared. It is expounded in his *Prælectiones Academicæ*, and also in a review of Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, which has been republished in Keble's *Occasional Papers and Reviews*. The most important pages of the review are quoted in Prickard (*Aristotle on the Art of Poetry*), pp. 102 sqq. W. Lock

doubt, almost exhausts the meaning of the phrase as it is used in the *Politics*. It also expresses, as has been above explained, one important aspect of the tragic *katharsis*. But the word, as taken up by Aristotle into his terminology of art, has probably a further meaning. It expresses not only a fact of psychology or of pathology, but a principle of art. The original metaphor is in itself a guide to the full aesthetic significance of the term. In the medical language of the school of Hippocrates it strictly denotes the removal of a painful or disturbing element from the organism, and hence the purifying of what remains, by the elimination of alien matter.<sup>1</sup> Applying this to tragedy we observe

(*Biography of Keble*) sums up the theory thus: 'Poetry is essentially for him a relief to the poet, a relief for overcharged emotion. It is the utterance of feelings which struggle for expression, but which are too deep for perfect expression at all, much more for expression in the language of daily life.' Having pointed out that Keble's theory rests mainly on the *Poetics* he adds: 'But Aristotle writes as a critic and is thinking of the effect upon the readers; Keble, as a poet, dwells primarily on the effect upon the poet, and secondarily on that upon the readers.'

<sup>1</sup> *κένωσις* in the Hippocratic writings denotes the entire removal of healthy but surplus humours (τῶν οἰκείων ὅταν ὑπερβάλλῃ τῷ πλήθει); *κάθαρσις* the removal of τὰ λυπούντα and the like,—'of qualitatively alien matter' (τῶν ἀλλοτρίων κατὰ ποιότητα, Galen). Thus Galen xvi. 105, *κένωσις* ὅταν ἅπαντες οἱ χυμοὶ ὁμοίως κενῶνται, *κάθαρσις* δὲ ὅταν οἱ μοχθηροὶ κατὰ ποιότητα: xvi. 106, ἔστι μὲν οὖν ἡ *κάθαρσις* τῶν λυπούντων κατὰ ποιότητα *κένωσις*: cf. [Plato] *Ὅροι* 415 D, *κάθαρσις* ἀπόκρισις χειρόνων ἀπὸ βελτιόνων.

*καθαίρειν* admits of a double construction. It takes—

that the feelings of pity and fear in real life contain a morbid and disturbing element. In the process of tragic excitation they find relief, and the morbid element is thrown off. As the tragic action progresses, when the tumult of the mind, first roused, has afterwards subsided, the lower forms of emotion are found to have been transmuted into higher and more refined forms. The painful element in the pity and fear of reality is purged away; the emotions themselves are purged. The curative and tranquillising influence that tragedy exercises follows as an immediate accompaniment of the transformation of feeling. Tragedy, then, does

- (i) An accusative of the disturbing element which is expelled or *purged away*: e.g. τὸ περίττωμα, τὰ λυπούντα, τὰ ἀλλότρια. The idea here uppermost is the negative one of removing a foreign substance.
- (ii) An accusative of the object which is *purged* by this process of removal: e.g. τὸν ἄνθρωπον, τὸ σῶμα, τὴν ψυχὴν, τὰ παθήματα. The idea here uppermost is the positive one of purifying or clarifying the organism, organ, or portion of the system from which the morbid matter is expelled.

Corresponding to this twofold use of the accusative with the verb we have a twofold use of the genitive with the noun *κάθαρσις* :—

- (i) *κάθαρσις τῶν λυπούντων, τοῦ περιττώματος, τῶν ἀλλοτρίων* and the like. To this class belongs the expression in Plato *Phaedo* 69 C, *κάθαρσις τῶν τοιούτων πάντων* (sc. τῶν ἡδονῶν), ‘the purging away of these pleasures,’ the pleasures being regarded as not merely containing a morbid element, but as being in themselves morbid; cf. Plut. *De Inim. Util.* 10, 91 F, τῶν παθῶν τούτων ποιούμενος εἰς τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ἀποκαθάρσεις, ‘expending (or discharging) these

more than effect the homoeopathic cure of certain—passions. Its function on this view is not merely—to provide an outlet for pity or fear, but to provide for them a distinctively aesthetic satisfaction, to purify and clarify them by passing them through the medium of art.

But what is the nature of this clarifying process? Here we have no direct reply from Aristotle. He has, however, left us some few hints, some materials, out of which we may perhaps reconstruct the outlines of his thought.

The idea of *katharsis* implies, as we have seen, the expulsion of a painful and disquieting element,

feelings upon his enemies' (in order to rid himself from them).

- (ii) *κάθαρσις* ('purgation of') τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, τοῦ σώματος, τῶν παθημάτων, where the genitive expresses the person or thing on which the *κάθαρσις* takes effect.

In the definition of tragedy the genitive seems to fall under (ii). The *κάθαρσις τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων* is 'the purgation or purification of the pity and fear' of real life by the expulsion of the morbid element. This element is—it is argued above—a certain pain or λύπη, which again arises from the selfishness which clings to these emotions in actual life.

The interpretation of Bernays, 'the alleviating discharge of these emotions,' implies that the genitive falls under (i). According to this interpretation the cure is effected by the total expulsion of the emotions, instead of by their clarification.

The double meaning of the accusative with *καθαίρειν* is already foreshadowed in Homer, who employs a double accusative, of the thing and of the person: *Iliad* xvi. 667—

εἰ δ' ἄγε νῦν, φίλε Φοῖβε, κελαινεφές αἷμα κάθηρον  
ἐλθὼν ἐκ βελέων Σαρπηδόνα.

—τὰ λυποῦντα. Now pity and fear in their relation to real life are by Aristotle reckoned among τὰ λυποῦντα. Each of them is, according to the definition in the *Rhetoric*, a form of pain (λύπη τις). Pity Fear Aristotle defines to be 'a species of pain or disturbance arising from an impression of impending evil which is destructive or painful in its nature.'<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the evil is near not remote, and the persons threatened are ourselves. Similarly, pity is 'a sort of pain at an evident evil of a destructive or painful kind in the case of somebody who does not deserve it, the evil being one which we might expect to happen to ourselves or to some of our friends, and this at a time when it is seen to be near at hand.'<sup>2</sup> Pity, however, turns into fear where the object is so nearly related to us that the suffering seems to be our own.<sup>3</sup> Thus pity and fear in Aristotle are strictly correlated feelings. We pity others where under like circumstances we

<sup>1</sup> Welldon's Trans. of *Rhet.* ii. 5. 1382 a 21, ἔστω δὲ φόβος λύπη τις ἢ ταραχὴ ἐκ φαντασίας μέλλοντος κακοῦ φθαρτικοῦ ἢ λυπηροῦ.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. ii. 8. 1385 b 13, ἔστω δὲ ἔλεος λύπη τις ἐπὶ φαινομένῳ κακῷ φθαρτικῷ καὶ λυπηρῷ τοῦ ἀναξίου τυγχάνειν, ὃ κἂν αὐτὸς προσδοκῆσαι ἂν παθεῖν ἢ τῶν αὐτοῦ τινά, καὶ τοῦτο ὅταν πλησίον φαίνηται. Cf. 1386 a 28, ἐπεὶ δ' ἐγγὺς φαινόμενα τὰ πάθος ἔλκεινά ἐστιν, τὰ δὲ μυριστὸν ἔτος γεγόμενα ἢ ἐσόμενα οὔτε ἐλπίζοντες οὔτε μεμνημένοι ἢ ὅλως οὐκ ἐλεοῦσιν ἢ οὐχ ὁμοίως, κ.τ.λ.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. ii. 8. 1386 a 17, ἐλεοῦσι δὲ τοὺς τε γνωρίμους, ἂν μὴ σφόδρα ἐγγὺς ᾖσιν οἰκειότητι· περὶ δὲ τούτους ὥσπερ περὶ αὐτοὺς μέλλοντας ἔχουσιν.

should fear for ourselves.<sup>1</sup> Those who are incapable of fear are incapable also of pity.<sup>2</sup>

Thus in psychological analysis fear is the primary emotion from which pity derives its meaning. Its basis is a self-regarding instinct; it springs from the feeling that a similar suffering may happen to ourselves. It has in it a latent and potential fear. But it is a wrong inference to say, as Lessing does,<sup>3</sup> that fear is always an ingredient in pity,—that we fear for ourselves whenever we feel pity for another. The Aristotelian idea simply is that we would feel for ourselves if we were in the position of him who is the object of our pity. The possible fear may never become actual, but the strength of the pity is not thereby impaired. Still the tacit reference to self makes the pity of the *Rhetoric* sensibly different from the pure instinct of compassion, the unselfish sympathy with others'

<sup>1</sup> *Rhet.* ii. 8. 1386 a 27, ὅσα ἐφ' αὐτῶν φοβοῦνται, ταῦτα ἐπ' ἄλλων γιγνόμενα ἐλεοῦσιν. ii. 5. 1382 b 26, ὡς δ' ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν, φοβερά ἐστιν ὅσα ἐφ' ἐτέρων γιγνόμενα ἢ μέλλοντα ἐλεεινά ἐστιν.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* ii. 8. 1385 b 19, διὸ οὔτε οἱ παντελῶς ἀπολωλότες ἐλεοῦσιν· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἂν ἐτι παθεῖν οἶονται, πεπόνθασι γάρ· οὔτε οἱ ὑπερευδαιμονεῖν οἰόμενοι, ἀλλ' ὑβρίζουσιν. Cf. ii. 5. 1383 a 9.

<sup>3</sup> Lessing *Hamd. Dram.* Trans. (Bohn) pp. 409, 415, 436. The view that the mention of fear in the definition is superfluous, fear being implicit in pity, is strangely inconsistent with the position he takes up against Corneille, that pity and fear are the tragic emotions, pity alone being insufficient.



distress, which most modern writers understand by pity.<sup>1</sup>

The conditions of dramatic representation, and above all the combined appeal which tragedy makes to both feelings, will considerably modify the emotions as they are known in actual reality. Pity in itself undergoes no essential change. It has still for its object the misfortunes of 'one who is undeserving' (ὁ ἀνάξιος); which phrase, as interpreted by Aristotle (*Poet.* ch. xiii.), means not a wholly innocent sufferer, but rather a man who meets with sufferings beyond his deserts. The emotion of fear is profoundly altered when it is transferred from the real to the imaginative world. It is no longer the direct apprehension of misfortune impending over our own life. It is not caused by the actual approach of danger. It

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mendelssohn, 'Pity is a complex emotion composed of love for an object and displeasure caused by its misery.' Schopenhauer held pity to be at the root of all true morality. Aristotle himself in the *Rhetoric* marks a distinction between the disinterested and generous ἔλεος of the young and the self-regarding ἔλεος of the old: ii. 12. 1389 b 8, the young are ἐλεητικοὶ διὰ τὸ πάντας χρηστοὺς καὶ βελτίους ὑπολαμβάνειν . . . ὥστε ἀνάξια πάσχειν ὑπολαμβάνουσιν αὐτούς. ii. 13. 1390 a 19, ἐλεητικοὶ δὲ καὶ οἱ γέροντές εἰσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ διὰ ταῦτ' τοῖς νέοις· οἱ μὲν γὰρ διὰ φιланθρωπίαν, οἱ δὲ δι' ἀσθένειαν· πάντα γὰρ οἴονται ἐγγὺς εἶναι αὐτοῖς παθεῖν. For a similar disinterested compassion cf. the striking lines of Euripides *Electra* 294—

ἔνεστι δ' οἶκτος ἀμαθία μὲν οὐδαμῶ  
σοφοῖσι δ' ἀνδρῶν.

is the reflex of the pity that we feel for the tragic hero. His misfortunes make us tremble for ourselves,<sup>1</sup> and for the possibilities of human nature,

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 2, . . . οὔτε ἔλεον οὔτε φόβον, ὁ μὲν γὰρ περὶ τὸν ἀνάξιον ἐστὶν δυστυχοῦντα, ὁ δὲ περὶ τὸν ὅμοιον, ἔλεος μὲν περὶ τὸν ἀνάξιον, φόβος δὲ περὶ τὸν ὅμοιον. If this passage stood alone, grammatical symmetry would lead us to suppose that as we feel ἔλεος for τὸν ἀνάξιον, so we feel φόβος for τὸν ὅμοιον: that our fear, in fact, is primarily not for ourselves or for our common humanity, but for the tragic hero. So the words have been taken by some distinguished scholars. Tragic fear, they maintain, is the fear felt for the hero while the misfortune is still impending; pity, on the other hand, is awakened by events in the present or the past.

There are objections to this view which do not seem to be altogether met by Tumlriz (*Die tragische Affecte Mitleid und Furcht*, Wien 1885), or by Susemihl (*Jahresbericht*, xlii. 260 ff.):—

(1) Fear in Aristotle is not distinguished from pity by a reference to future time. In *Rhet.* ii. 5. 1382 b 26, quoted p. 252 note 1, μέλλοντα shows that we may pity a man for what is about to happen. Cf. also *Rhet.* ii. 8. 1386 a 34, ἥ ὡς μέλλον ἢ ὡς γεγονός.

(2) If pity and fear in tragedy are only two sides of the same feeling, why distinguish them as sharply as is done in *Poet.* xi. 4, ἢ ἔλεον ἢ φόβον: xiv. 3, ποῖα οὖν δεινὰ ἢ ποῖα οἰκτρὰ φαίνεται? And why again insist, as Aristotle does, on the combined effect? In any play with a tragic ending, in which the incidents work up towards a catastrophe, pity at the event implies, on this theory, a preceding fear: the special mention of fear might be dispensed with.

(3) Pity, says Aristotle, is περὶ τὸν ἀνάξιον, fear περὶ τὸν ὅμοιον. But why should the mere distinction of time make a distinction of character necessary? Why, that is, must the hero be ἀνάξιος if we are to feel for him in present misfortune, but ὅμοιος if we are to feel for him under impending calamity? The change in the personal object suggests that one feeling is not simply a phase of the other, aroused at a different moment of the play, but that the object of pity is distinct from the object of fear.

—unlikely as we are ever to be placed in circumstances precisely identical with his.

The tragic sufferer is a man like ourselves (*ὁμοιος*);<sup>1</sup> and on that likeness the whole effect of tragedy, as described in the *Poetics*, hinges. Without it he would fail to win our sympathy.

On the whole, then, I am inclined to think that the *περί* has a different sense in the two clauses: 'we feel pity for *ὁ ἀνάξιος*: we feel fear in connexion with *ὁ ὁμοιος*,' i.e. his sufferings awaken a fear for ourselves who share his humanity. The change of meaning thus given to *περί* is undeniably harsh, and can be justified only by the consideration that the antithesis between *φόβος*, 'fear for one's self,' and *ἔλεος*, 'pity for another,' must have been so familiar a part of Aristotelian teaching (cf. the *Rhetoric*) as to make it possible for *φόβος* to retain this sense in spite of *περί*, which in the particular context would naturally suggest another object for *φόβος*.

In reply to those who argue that *περί* must bear *precisely* the same meaning with both words, it is worth pointing out that this is impossible on any interpretation. The phrase *ἔλεος ἐστὶ περὶ τὸν ἀνάξιον* can only mean *ἐλεοῦμεν τὸν ἀνάξιον*: on the other hand *φόβος ἐστὶ περὶ τὸν ὁμοιον* cannot possibly in this reference mean *φοβούμεθα τὸν ὁμοιον*.

In any case, whether we take *φόβος* to be *primarily* fear for ourselves and our common humanity, or fear for the hero, the two feelings become closely interwoven in tragedy. In proportion as the hero is *ὁμοιος* we experience the same sympathetic thrill or shudder (cf. *φρίττειν*, *Poet.* xiv. 1; Plato *Rep.* iii. 387 C, *ὅσα . . . φρίττειν δὴ ποιῶ . . . τοὺς ἀκούοντας*) that we do in beholding the misfortunes of those whom we love or count as one of ourselves; and the awakening of fear as distinct from mere pity depends, it would seem, on this close identification between the hero and ourselves rather than on the time-distinction alluded to above.

<sup>1</sup> In *Poet.* xiii. 2 (see last note) *φόβος* is *περὶ τὸν ὁμοιον*, while *ἔλεος* is *περὶ τὸν ἀνάξιον*. In *Rhet.* ii. 8. 1386 a 24, *τοὺς ὁμοίους ἐλεοῦσιν κατὰ ἡλικίαν, κατὰ ἡθὴ κ.τ.λ.*, the reason, however, being added that such similarity of conditions suggests fear for ourselves.

The resemblance on which Aristotle insists is one of moral character. His hero (*Poet.* ch. xiii.) is a man not of flawless perfection, nor yet of consummate villainy; by which we must not understand that he has merely average or mediocre qualities. He rises, indeed, above the common level in moral elevation and dignity, but he is not free from frailties and imperfections.<sup>1</sup> His must be a rich and full humanity, composed of elements which other men possess, but blended more harmoniously or of more potent quality. So much human nature must there be in him that we are able in some sense to identify ourselves with him, to make his misfortunes our own. At the same time he is raised above us in external dignity and station. He is a prince or famous man who falls from a height of greatness. Apart from the impressive effect of the contrast so presented, there is a gain in the hero being placed at an ideal distance from the spectator. We are not confronted with outward conditions of life too like our own. The pressure of immediate reality is removed; we are not painfully reminded of the cares of our own material existence. We have here part of the refining process which the tragic emotions undergo within the region of art. They are disengaged from the petty interests of self, and are on the way to being universalised.

<sup>1</sup> See *infra* ch. viii.

The tragic fear, though modified in passing under the conditions of art, is not, in Aristotle, a languid sympathy. Being refracted through pity, it differs from the crushing apprehension of personal disaster. It is true that in reading or witnessing the *Oedipus Tyrannus* we are not seized with the apprehension that we may commit the same errors as Oedipus, or be overtaken by the same calamities.<sup>1</sup> Yet a thrill runs through us, a shudder of horror or of vague foreboding.<sup>2</sup> The object of dread is not a definite evil threatening us at close quarters. But the vividness with which the imagination apprehends possible calamity produces the same intensity of impression as if the danger were at hand.<sup>3</sup> We are brought into a mood in which we feel that we too are 'liable to suffering.'<sup>4</sup> In the

<sup>1</sup> Corneille (Discours ii. *De la Tragédie*) argues from the absence of any such dread that the *Oedipus Tyrannus* excites pity only, and not fear. But if fear is rightly understood, it is *par excellence* a tragedy of fear.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xiv. 1, δέῖ γὰρ καὶ ἄνευ τοῦ ὁρᾶν οὕτω συνεστάναι τὸν μῦθον, ὥστε τὸν ἀκούοντα τὰ πράγματα γινόμενα καὶ φρίττειν καὶ ἐλεεῖν ἐκ τῶν συμβαινόντων· ἅπερ ἂν πάθοι τις ἀκούων τὸν τοῦ Οἰδίου μῦθον (cf. supra p. 255, note).

<sup>3</sup> This fact as the result of dramatic presentation is stated by Aristotle with regard to ἔλεος, *Rhet.* ii. 8. 1386 a 31, ἀνάγκη τοὺς συναπεργαζομένους σχήμασι καὶ φωναῖς καὶ ἐσθῆσι (αἰσθήσει Α') καὶ ὅλως ἐν ὑποκρίσει ἐλεεινότερους εἶναι· ἐγγὺς γὰρ τοιοῦσι φαίνεσθαι τὸ κακὸν πρὸ ὀμμάτων ποιούντες, ἢ ὡς μέλλον ἢ ὡς γεγὸς. (For τοὺς συναπ. σχήμ. cf. *Poet.* xvii. 1.)

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Rhet.* ii. 5. 1383 a 8, ὥστε δέῖ τοιοῦτους παρασκευάζειν, ὅταν ἢ βέλτιον τὸ φοβεῖσθαι αὐτοὺς, ὅτι τοιοῦτοὶ εἰσιν οἳ παθεῖν· καὶ γὰρ ἄλλοι μείζους ἔπαθον.

spectacle of another's errors or misfortunes, in the shocks and blows of circumstance, we read the 'doubtful doom of human kind.' The tragic fear, self-regarding in its primary reference, becomes an almost impersonal emotion. On the one hand it is distinct from the sympathetic anxiety we feel for the hero whose doom is still impending, and in whose existence we have for the time merged our own. On the other, it is no immediate apprehension for ourselves. The events indeed as they pass before us seem almost as if we were directly concerned. But the true tragic emotion of fear attaches itself not to this or that particular incident, but to the general course of the action, which is for us an image of human destiny. We are thrilled with awe at the tragic issues thus unfolded, and with a sense of the moral inevitableness of the result. In the awe so inspired the emotions of fear and pity are blended.

We can see now that the essential tragic effect depends on maintaining the intimate alliance between pity and fear. According to Aristotle, not pity alone should be evoked by tragedy, as many moderns have held<sup>1</sup>; not pity *or* fear, for which

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Schiller in his essay *On Tragic Art*. Elsewhere in his letters and other writings he sometimes speaks of fear as well as pity; but his fear is not the Aristotelian fear; it is merely the apprehension felt while the terrible event is still in the future, a fear which becomes pity after the event.

In ancient tragedy fear was a powerful and necessary factor.

Corneille argued<sup>1</sup>; not pity and 'admiration,' which is the version of the Aristotelian expression which is current in the Elizabethan writers.<sup>2</sup> The requirement of Aristotle is pity *and* fear.<sup>3</sup> He would no doubt allow that in some tragedies the primary and predominant impression is fear, in others pity. He would probably go farther and say that an inferior tragedy may excite one only of the two emotions generally called tragic.<sup>4</sup> But the full tragic effect requires the union of the two, nor can

In modern tragedy—with the exception of Shakespeare—pity predominates over fear. In the eighteenth century fear was almost entirely eliminated.

<sup>1</sup> Corneille, Discours ii. *De la Tragédie*. He thinks he is supported by Aristotle in this view. 'Il suffit selon lui (Aristote) de l'un des deux pour faire cette purgation, avec cette différence toutefois, que la pitié n'y peut arriver sans la crainte, et que la crainte peut y parvenir sans la pitié.' But, as has been already shown, there may be pity without fear in the Aristotelian sense.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Sir Philip Sidney *An Apologie for Poetrie*: 'The high and excellent Tragedy . . . that with stirring the affects of admiration and commiseration teacheth the uncertainty of the world. . . .'

<sup>3</sup> The twofold emotion is recognised in Plato *Phaedr.* 268 C, τί δ' εἰ Σοφοκλεῖ αὖ προσελθὼν καὶ Εὐριπίδῃ τις λέγοι, ὥς ἐπίσταται περὶ μικροῦ πράγματος ῥήσεις παμμήκεις ποιεῖν καὶ περὶ μεγάλου πάνυ μικράς, ὅταν τε βούληται οἰκτρὰς, καὶ τούναντίον αὖ φοβερὰς καὶ ἀπειλητικὰς. . . . *Ion* 535 E, καθορῶ γὰρ ἐκάστοτε αὐτοὺς ἄνωθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος κλαίοντάς τε καὶ δεινὸν ἐμβλέποντας καὶ συνθαμβοῦντας τοῖς λεγομένοις.

<sup>4</sup> In the passages where 'pity or fear' occurs instead of 'pity and fear' the disjunctive particle retains its proper force. In *Poet.* xi. 4 the reference is to the effect of a special kind of ἀναγνώρισις combined with περιπέτεια rather than to the total impression of the tragedy: ἡ γὰρ τοιαύτη ἀναγνώρισις καὶ περιπέτεια ἢ ἔλεον ἔξει ἢ φόβον, οἷων πράξεων ἢ τραγῳδία

the distinctive function of tragedy as *katharsis* is to be discharged otherwise.

In the phrase of the anonymous fragment, 'On Comedy,'<sup>1</sup> which appears to contain some genuine Aristotelian tradition, 'tragedy blends fear with pity in due proportion' (ἡ τραγῳδία συμμετρία θέλει ἔχειν τοῦ φόβου). Pity, as Bernays explains, through its kinship with fear, is preserved from eccentricity and sentimentalism. Fear, through its alliance with pity, is divested of a narrow selfishness, of the vulgar terror which is inspired by personal danger.<sup>2</sup> A self-absorbed anxiety or alarm makes us incapable of sympathy with others. In this sense 'fear casts out pity.'<sup>3</sup> Tragic fear,

μίμησις ὑπόκειται. Again in xiii. 2 we read, οὐ γὰρ φοβερὸν οὐδὲ ἔλεινόν τοῦτο: οὔτε γὰρ φιλόανθρωπον οὔτε ἔλεινόν οὔτε φοβερὸν ἔστι: οὔτε ἔλεον οὔτε φόβον (ἔχοι ἄν): οὔτε ἔλεινόν οὔτε φοβερὸν ἔσται τὸ συμβαῖνον: none of the plots here referred to has any of the elements of tragedy, much less can the full tragic effect be thus produced.

<sup>1</sup> Printed by Vahlen and Susemihl at the end of their editions of the *Poetics*, and commented on in detail by Bernays, pp. 142 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Voltaire quotes with approval the observation of Saint-Evremond that in French tragedy tenderness takes the place of pity and surprise the place of fear. 'It cannot be denied,' he says, 'that Saint-Evremond has put his finger on the secret sore of the French theatre.' The idea of fear, again, was frequently the horrible or frightening. Thus in France in the seventeenth century the conception of the tragic had come to be the union of the sentimental and the horrible.

<sup>3</sup> *Rhet.* ii. 8. 1386 a 21, τὸ γὰρ δεινὸν ἕτερον τοῦ ἔλεινους καὶ ἐκκρουστικὸν τοῦ ἔλέου. Cf. ii. 8. 1385 b 33, οὐ γὰρ ἐλεοῦσιν οἱ ἐκτεπληγμένοι διὰ τὸ εἶναι πρὸς τῷ οἰκείῳ πάθει.



though it may send an inward shudder through the blood, does not paralyse the mind or stun the sense, as does the direct vision of some impending calamity. And the reason is that this fear, unlike the fear of common reality, is based on an imaginative union with another's life. The spectator is lifted out of himself. He becomes one with the tragic sufferer, and through him with humanity at large. One effect of the drama, said Plato, is that through it a man becomes many, instead of one; it makes him lose his proper personality in a pantomimic instinct, and so prove false to himself. Aristotle might reply: True; he passes out of himself, but it is through the enlarging power of sympathy. He forgets his own petty sufferings. He quits the narrow sphere of the individual. He identifies himself with the fate of mankind.

We are here brought back to Aristotle's theory of poetry as a representation of the universal. Tragedy exemplifies with concentrated power this highest function of the poetic art. The characters it depicts, the actions and fortunes of the persons with whom it acquaints us, possess a typical and universal value. The artistic unity of plot, binding together the several parts of the play in close inward coherence, reveals the law of human destiny, the causes and effects of suffering. The incidents which thrill us are intensified in their

effect, when to the shock of surprise is added the discovery that each thing as it has happened could not be otherwise; it stands in organic relation to what has gone before.<sup>1</sup> Pity and fear awakened in connexion with these larger aspects of human suffering, and kept in close alliance with one another, become universalised emotions. What is purely personal and self-regarding drops away. The spectator who is brought face to face with grander sufferings than his own experiences a sympathetic ecstasy, or lifting out of himself. It is precisely in this transport of feeling, which carries a man outside his individual self, that the distinctive tragic pleasure resides. Pity and fear are purged of the impure element which clings to them in life. In the glow of tragic excitement these feelings are so transformed that the net result is a noble emotional satisfaction.

The *katharsis*, viewed as a refining process, may have primarily implied no more to Aristotle than the expulsion of the disturbing element, namely, the pain,<sup>2</sup> which enters into pity and fear when aroused by real objects. The mere fact of

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ix. 11, where the point lies in the union of the *παρὰ τὴν δόξαν* with the *δι' ἄλληλα*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Plut. Symp. Qu.* iii. 8 (in reference to the musical *katharsis*), ὥσπερ ἡ θρηνηδία καὶ ὁ ἐπιτήδειος αὐλὸς ἐν ἀρχῇ πάθος κινεῖ καὶ δάκρυον ἐκβάλλει, προάγων δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν εἰς οἶκτον οὕτω κατὰ μικρὸν ἐξαιρεῖ καὶ ἀναλίσκει τὸ λυπητικόν—a passage which is also instructive as to the *kathartic* method generally.

such an expulsion would have supplied him with a point of argument against Plato, in addition to the main line of reply above indicated.<sup>1</sup> In the *Philebus* Plato had described the mixed (*μυχθεῖσαι*) or impure (*ἀκάθαρτοι*) pleasures as those which have in them an alloy of pain; and the pleasure of tragedy was stated to be of the mixed order.<sup>2</sup> The Aristotelian theory asserts that the emotions on which tragedy works do indeed in real life contain a large admixture of pain, but that by artistic treatment the painful element is expelled or overpowered.

In the foregoing pages, however, we have carried the analysis a step farther, and shown how and why the pain gives way to pleasure. The sting of the pain, the disquiet and unrest, arise from the selfish element which in the world of reality clings to these emotions. The pain is expelled when the taint of egoism is removed. If it is objected that the notion of universalising the emotions and ridding them of an intrusive element that belongs to the sphere of the accidental and individual, is a modern conception, which we have no warrant for attributing to Aristotle, we may reply that if this

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 241-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Phil.* 50 B, μηνύει δὴ νῦν ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν ἐν θρήνοις τε καὶ ἐν τραγῳδίαις, μὴ τοῖς δράμασι μόνον ἀλλὰ τῇ τοῦ βίου ξυμπᾶσθαι τραγῳδίᾳ καὶ κωμῳδίᾳ, λύπας ἡδοναῖς ἅμα κεράννυσθαι ἄλλοις δὲ μυρίοις. Cf. 48 A, τὰς γε τραγῳδίας καὶ κωμῳδίας ἅμα χαίροντες κλάωσι.

is not what Aristotle meant, it is at least the natural outcome of his doctrine; to this conclusion his general theory of poetry points.

Let us assume, then, that the tragic *katharsis* involves not only the idea of an emotional relief, but the further idea of the purifying of the emotions so relieved. In accepting this interpretation we do not ascribe to tragedy a direct moral purpose and influence. (Tragedy, according to the definition, acts on the feelings, not on the will. It does not make men better, but removes certain hindrances to virtue. The refinement of feeling under temporary and artificial excitement is still far removed from moral improvement. Aristotle would probably admit that indirectly the drama has a moral influence, in enabling the emotional system to throw off some perilous stuff, certain elements of feeling, which, if left to themselves, might develop dangerous energy, and impede the free play of those vital functions on which the exercise of virtue depends. The excitation of noble emotions will probably in time exert an influence on the will. But whatever may be the indirect effect of the repeated operation of the *katharsis*, we may confidently say that Aristotle in his definition of tragedy is thinking, not of any such remote result, but of the immediate end of the art, of the aesthetic function it fulfils.

It is only under certain conditions of art that the homoeopathic cure of pity and fear by similar emotions is possible. Fear cannot be combined with the proper measure of pity, unless the subject matter admits of being universalised. The dramatic action must be so significant, and its meaning capable of such extension, that through it we can discern the higher laws which rule the world. The private life of an individual, tragic as it may be in its inner quality, has never been made the subject of the highest tragedy. Its consequences are not of far-reaching importance; it does not move the imagination with sufficient power. Within the narrow circle of a *bourgeois* existence a great action is hardly capable of being unfolded. The keenest feeling of pity may be elicited by the conditions of such a life; the action may even be represented with much dramatic force: but it is open to question whether it will not of necessity retain some traces of littleness, which hinder the awakening of tragic fear,—still more of that solemnity and awe which is the final feeling left by genuine tragedy. Some quality of greatness in the situation as well as in the characters appears to be all but indispensable, if we are to be raised above the individual suffering, and experience a calming instead of a disquieting feeling at the close. The tragic *katharsis* requires that suffering shall be exhibited in one

of its comprehensive aspects; that the deeds and fortunes of the actors shall attach themselves to larger issues, and the spectator himself be lifted above the special case, and brought face to face with universal law and the divine plan of the world.

In order that an emotion may be not only excited but also allayed,—that the tumult of the mind may be resolved into a pleasurable calm,—the emotion, stirred by a fictitious representation, must divest itself of its purely selfish and material elements, and become part of a new order of things. It is perhaps for this reason that love in itself is hardly a tragic motive. The more exclusive and self-absorbed a passion is, the more does it resist kathartic treatment. The feelings excited must have their basis in the permanent and objective realities of life, and be independent of individual caprice or sentiment. In the ordinary novel the passion of love in its egoistic and self-centred interest does not admit of being generalised, or its story enlarged into a typical and independent action. The rare cases where a love story is truly tragic go to prove the point which is here enforced. In *Romeo and Juliet* the tragedy does not lie merely in the unhappy ending of a tale of true love. Certain other conditions, beyond those which contribute to give a dramatic interest, are required to produce the tragic effect. There is the

in the  
case of  
the  
tragedy  
the  
figure

feud of the two houses, whose high place in the commonwealth makes their enmity an affair of public concern. The lovers in their new-found rapture act in defiance of all external obligations. The elemental force and depth of their passion bring them into collision with the fabric of the society to which they belong. Their tragic doom quickly closes in upon them. Yet even in death the consequences of their act extend beyond the sphere of the individual. Over the grave of their love the two houses are reconciled.

Tragedy, as it has been here explained, satisfies a universal human need. The fear and pity on and through which it operates are not, as some have maintained, rare and abnormal emotions. All men, as Aristotle says,<sup>1</sup> are susceptible to them, some persons in an overpowering measure. For the modern, as for the ancient world, they are still among the primary instincts; always present, if below the surface, and ready to be called into activity.<sup>2</sup> The Greeks, from temperament, circumstances, and religious beliefs, may have been more sensitive to their influence than we are, and more likely to suffer from them in a morbid form. Greek tragedy, indeed, in its beginnings was but a wild religious excitement, a bacchic ecstasy. This aimless ecstasy was brought under artistic law.

<sup>1</sup> *Pol.* v. (viii.) 7. 1342 a 5-7.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, pp. 154-5.

It was ennobled by objects worthy of an ideal emotion. The poets found out how the transport of human pity and human fear might, under the excitation of art, be dissolved in joy, and the pain escape in the purified tide of human sympathy.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE DRAMATIC UNITIES

‘UNITY of plot does not,’ says Aristotle,<sup>1</sup> ‘as some persons think, consist in the unity of the hero. For infinitely various are the incidents in one man’s life, which cannot be reduced to unity: and so, too, there are many actions of one man out of which we cannot make one action. Hence the error, as it appears, of all poets who have composed a *Heracleid*, a *Theseid*, or other poems of the kind. They imagine that as *Heracles* was one man, the story of *Heracles* must also be a unity.’ Such is the principle laid down for tragedy in ch. viii., and *Homer* is there held up as the true model even to the tragedian. Precisely the same principle is affirmed of epic poetry in ch. xxiii., where it is added that unity of time, like unity of person, does not of itself bind events into a unity.<sup>2</sup> Not only epics like the *Achilleid* of *Statius* offend against this fundamental principle, but also many modern dramas in which the life and character of the hero become

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* viii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xxiii. 1–4.

the ultimate motive, and a biographical or historical interest takes the place of the dramatic interest.

The first requirement of a tragedy is Unity of Action.<sup>1</sup> Unity in Aristotle is the principle of limit, without which an object loses itself in the *ἄπειρον*, the region of the undefined, the indeterminate, the accidental. By means of unity the plot becomes individual and also intelligible. The greater the unity, the more perfect will it be as a concrete and individual thing; at the same time it will gain in universality and typical quality.<sup>2</sup>

The Unity of the tragic action is, again, an organic unity, an inward principle which reveals itself in the form of an outward whole.<sup>3</sup> It is opposed indeed to plurality, but not opposed to the idea of manifoldness and variety; for simple as it is in one sense, it admits of all the complexity of vital phenomena. The whole (*ὅλον*) in which it is manifested is complete (*τέλειον*)<sup>4</sup> in its parts, the

<sup>1</sup> For the meaning of *πράξις*, 'action,' see pp. 123 and 327 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> In *Prob.* xviii. 9. 917 b 8 sqq., the pleasure derived from a Unity is ultimately resolved into the fact that it is *γνωριμώτερον*: *διὰ τί ποτε τῶν ἱστοριῶν ἥδιον ἀκούομεν τῶν περὶ ἐν συνεστηκυῶν ἢ τῶν περὶ πολλὰ πραγματευομένων; ἥ διότι τοῖς γνωριμωτέροις μᾶλλον προσέχομεν καὶ ἥδιον αὐτῶν ἀκούομεν· γνωριμώτερον δέ ἐστι τὸ ὠρισμένον τοῦ ἀορίστου. τὸ μὲν οὖν ἐν ὠρίσται, τὰ δὲ πολλὰ τοῦ ἀπείρου μετέχει.*

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* ch. vii. (τὸ ὅλον), ch. viii. (τὸ ἔν): supra pp. 185 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> In the definition of tragedy (*Poet.* vi. 2) we have *τελείας πράξεως*, in vii. 2 *τελείας καὶ ὅλης πράξεως*. So in xiii. 1 epic poetry is *περὶ μίαν πρᾶξιν ὅλην καὶ τελείαν*. A perfect *ὅλον* is

parts themselves being arranged in a fixed order (τάξις), and structurally related so that none can be removed, none transposed, without disturbing the organism.<sup>1</sup> Within the single and complete action which constitutes the unity of a tragedy, the successive incidents are connected together by an inward and causal bond,—by the law of necessary and probable sequence, on which Aristotle is never tired of insisting.

Again, a certain magnitude (μέγεθος) is indispensable for the harmonious evolution of a whole such as is here described. This is frequently affirmed by Aristotle. As a biological law it applies to the healthy life and growth of all organic structures.<sup>2</sup> It is also an artistic law, expressing one of the first conditions of organic

necessarily τέλειον. In *Phys.* iii. 6. 207 a 7 sqq. ὅλον and τέλειον are opposed to ἄπειρον, and the two words declared to be almost equivalent in meaning: ἄπειρον μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ὃ κατὰ ποσὸν λαμβάνουσιν αἰεὶ τι λαβεῖν ἐστὶν ἔξω. ὃ δὲ μηδὲν ἔξω, τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τέλειον καὶ ὅλον· οὕτω γὰρ ὁρίζομεθα τὸ ὅλον, ὃ μὴ ἔστιν, ὅλον ἀνθρώπου ὅλον ἢ κιβωτόν: ib. 13, ὅλον δὲ καὶ τέλειον ἢ τὸ αὐτὸ πᾶμπαν ἢ σύνεγγυς τὴν φύσιν ἐστίν.

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* viii. 4, μετατιθεμένον τινὸς μέρους ἢ ἀφαιρουμένου διαφέρεισθαι (ἢ διαφορεῖσθαι or διαφθείρεσθαι) καὶ κινεῖσθαι τὸ ὅλον.

<sup>2</sup> *De Anim.* ii. 4. 416 a 16, τῶν δὲ φύσει συνισταμένων πάντων ὥστε πέρασ καὶ λόγος μεγέθους τε καὶ αὐξήσεως: *de Gen. Anim.* ii. 6. 745 a 6, ἔστι γάρ τι πᾶσι τοῖς ζώοις πέρασ τοῦ μεγέθους. The same principle applies to a πόλις, *Pol.* iv. (vii.) 4. 1326 a 35, ἀλλ' ἐστὶ τι καὶ πόλεσι μεγέθους μέτρον, ὥσπερ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πάντων, ζώων φυτῶν ὀργάνων. *Pol.* viii. (v.) 3. 1302 b 34, ὥσπερ σῶμα ἐκ μερῶν σύγκειται καὶ δεῖ αὐξάνεσθαι ἀνάλογον, ἵνα μένη συμμετρία, . . . οὕτω καὶ πόλις κ.τ.λ.

beauty.<sup>1</sup> In this latter sense it is emphasised in chapter vii. of the *Poetics*. An object is unfit for artistic representation if it is infinitely large or infinitesimally small.<sup>2</sup> On this principle a war such as the Trojan war, 'though it has a beginning and an end,' is too vast in its compass even for epic treatment; it cannot be grasped by the mind and incurs the risk attaching to any πολυμερὴ πρᾶξις, of becoming a series of detached scenes or incidents.<sup>3</sup>

Aristotle wisely avoids attempting to lay down any very precise rules as to the possible length which a play may be extended. What he does say on the subject is marked by much sobriety and good sense. He rejects as inartistic any reference to the outward and accidental conditions of stage representation.<sup>4</sup> He falls back on the law of beauty governing a work of art, and—intimately related to this—on men's normal powers of memory and enjoyment. The whole, he says, must be of such dimensions that the memory or mind's eye can

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* vii. 4, ἔτι δ' ἐπεὶ τὸ καλὸν καὶ ζῶν καὶ ἅπαν πρᾶγμα συνέστηκεν ἐκ τινῶν οὐ μόνον ταῦτα τεταγμένα δεῖ ἔχειν ἀλλὰ καὶ μέγεθος ὑπάρχειν μὴ τὸ τυχόν κ.τ.λ. Cf. *ib.* 7, αἰεὶ μὲν ὁ μῦθος (sc. μῦθος) μέχρι τοῦ σύνδεσμος εἶναι καλλίων ἔστι κατὰ τὸ μέγεθος *Pol.* iv. (vii.) 4. 1326 a 34, διὸ καὶ πόλιν ἥς μετὰ μεγέθους ὁ λεχθὲς ὅρος ὑπάρχει, ταύτην εἶναι καλλίστην ἀναγκαῖον.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* vii. 4-5 : *supra* p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* xxiii. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Poet.* vii. 6, τοῦ μήκου ὅρος <ὁ> μὲν πρὸς τοὺς ἀγῶνας καὶ τὴν αἰσθησιν οὐ τῆς τέχνης ἐστίν.

embrace and retain it.<sup>1</sup> The more truly artistic principle, however, is that which is stated in ch. vii. 7. A play should be of a magnitude sufficient to allow room for the natural development of the story. The action must evolve itself freely and fully, and the decisive change of fortune come about through the causal sequence of events.<sup>2</sup>

This rule holds good of the two varieties of plot that are afterwards distinguished,—of the *ἀπλή πράξις*, where the action proceeds on a simple and undeviating course from start to finish; and of the *πεπλεγμένη πράξις*—preferred by Aristotle as intensifying the tragic emotions—where the catastrophe is worked out by the surprises of Recognition (*ἀναγνώρισις*) and Reversal or Recoil of the Action (*περιπέτεια*);<sup>3</sup> these surprises, however, being themselves woven into the tissue of the plot,<sup>4</sup> and discovered in the light of the event to be the inevitable, though unexpected, consequences of all that has preceded.<sup>5</sup> The *λύσις*, the

<sup>1</sup> With *εὐμνημόνευτον* (ch. vii. 5) as a limit of *μέγεθος* in the tragic *μῦθος* cf. xxiii. 3, *εὐσύνοπτος*, and xxiv. 3, *δύνασθαι γὰρ δεῖ συνορᾶσθαι τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τὸ τέλος* in regard to epic poetry.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* vii. 7, *ὡς δὲ ἀπλῶς διορίζαντας εἰπεῖν, ἐν ὅσῳ μεγέθει κατὰ τὸ εἶδος ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον ἐφεξῆς γιγνομένων συμβαίνει εἰς εὐτυχίαν ἢ δυστυχίας ἢ ἐξ εὐτυχίας εἰς δυστυχίαν μεταβάλλειν, ἱκανὸς ὁρος ἐστὶν τοῦ μεγέθους.*

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* x. 1–2. For *περιπέτεια* see xi. 1 and *infra* pp. 323–4.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* x. 3, *ταῦτα δὲ δεῖ γίνεσθαι ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς συντάξεως τοῦ μύθου, . . . διαφέρει γὰρ πολὺ τὸ γίγνεσθαι τάδε διὰ τάδε ἢ μετὰ τάδε.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* ix. 11.

unravelling or *Dénouement* of the plot must, as we are told, in every case 'arise out of the plot itself,'<sup>1</sup> not by recourse to the *Deus ex Machina* or to the play of accident—a warning the need of which is proved by the whole history of the stage. 'What did she die of?' was asked concerning one of the characters in a bad tragedy. 'Of what? of the fifth act,' was the reply. Lessing, who tells the story, adds<sup>2</sup> that 'in very truth the fifth act is an ugly evil disease that carries off many a one to whom the first four acts promised a longer life.'

Let us now look a little more closely into Aristotle's conception of a 'whole,' as the term is applied to the tragic action.

'A whole,' he says, 'is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end'; and each of these terms is then defined. 'A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An end, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity or as a rule, but has nothing following it. A middle is that which follows

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xv. 7, φανερόν οὖν ὅτι καὶ τὰς λύσεις τῶν μύθων ἐξ αὐτοῦ δεῖ τοῦ μύθου συμβαίνειν κ.τ.λ. Cf. the censure passed ch. xvi. 4 on the mode in which Orestes is discovered by Iphigeneia in Eur. *I. T.*, ἐκείνος δὲ αὐτὸς λέγει ἃ βούλεται ὁ ποιητὴς ἄλλ' οὐχ ὁ μῦθος.

<sup>2</sup> Lessing, *Hamb. Dram.*, Trans. (Bohn) p. 238.

something as some other thing follows it.<sup>1</sup> Some difficulties have been felt with respect to these definitions. How, it is said, can a beginning be causally unconnected with what precedes? Do the opening scenes of a tragedy stand apart from the rest of the hero's career? Is nothing implied as to his previous history?

The answer would appear to be of this kind. The beginning of a drama is, no doubt, the natural sequel of something else. Still it must not carry us back in thought to all that has gone before. Antecedent events do not thrust themselves on us in an unending series. Certain facts are necessarily given. We do not trace each of these facts back to its origin, or follow the chain of cause and effect *ad infinitum*.<sup>2</sup> If we did, the drama would become

<sup>1</sup> Poet. vii. 3, ὅλον δέ ἐστιν τὸ ἔχον ἀρχὴν καὶ μέσον καὶ τελευτήν. ἀρχὴ δέ ἐστιν ὃ αὐτὸ μὲν μὴ ἐξ ἀνάγκης μετ' ἄλλο ὥστί, μετ' ἐκεῖνο δ' ἕτερον πέφυκεν εἶναι ἢ γίνεσθαι, τελευτὴ δέ τοῦναντίον ὃ αὐτὸ μετ' ἄλλο πέφυκεν εἶναι ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἢ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ, μετὰ δέ τοῦτο ἄλλο οὐδέν, μέσον δέ ὃ καὶ αὐτὸ μετ' ἄλλο καὶ μετ' ἐκεῖνο ἕτερον.

<sup>2</sup> So Teichmüller (*Arist. Forsch.* i. 54, 250) rightly, in defending the reading μὴ ἐξ ἀνάγκης in the definition of ἀρχή against the proposed transposition ἐξ ἀνάγκης μὴ. The latter reading, 'that which necessarily does not follow something else,' would, as he says, describe the *absolute* beginning, the πρῶτον κινουόν, whereas Aristotle here wishes to denote a *relative* beginning, that which follows other things in time, but not as a necessary consequence.

He adds, however, that the reason Aristotle insists on this *relative* beginning is that tragedy is within the sphere of freedom: it must be begun by an act of free will. It seems most unlikely that anything of the sort is in Aristotle's mind. On the

an endless retrograde movement. A play must begin at some definite point, and at some definite point it must end. It is for the poet to see that the action is complete in itself, and that neither the beginning nor the end is arbitrarily chosen. Within the dramatic action, a strict sequence of cause and effect is prescribed; but the causal chain must not be indefinitely extended outwards.

The definition of the 'middle' as 'that which follows something as some other thing follows it,' looks at first sight mere tautology: but the context shows that the word 'follows' here marks a causal, not a purely temporal sequence. The idea is that the 'middle' unlike the 'beginning' stands in causal relation to what goes before, and unlike the 'end' is causally connected with what follows. There is no attempt to mark at what point in the development of the play the 'middle' is to be placed. The purpose of the definitions is to exclude beginnings which require something to precede them, endings which do not conclude the action, and middles which stand alone, unconnected either with the beginning or the end. We have

other hand, it is true that the Greek tragedians do generally make the action begin at a point where the human will has free play. This is a striking feature in Sophocles' treatment of the legends. Dark or superhuman forces may be at work in the antecedents of the play, but within the tragedy there is human will in action. The *Ajax*, the *Philoctetes*, the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, and the *Oedipus Coloneus* are examples.



here an emphatic condemnation of that kind of plot which Aristotle calls 'epeisodic' (ἐπεισοδιώδης), where the scenes follow one another without the inward connexion of the εἰκός or ἀναγκαῖον.<sup>1</sup> A succession of stirring scenes does not make a tragedy; and it is just this truth that Euripides is apt to forget when, instead of creating a well articulated whole, he often delights to substitute pathetic effects, striking situations, rapid contrasts and surprises.

These definitions, however, like so many in the *Poetics*, have reference to the ideal tragedy; they are not to be taken as a rule to which all Greek plays conform. This will account for the inconsistency between the account here given of the 'beginning,' and the account in ch. xviii. of the Complication (δέσις) and *Dénouement* (λύσις) of the tragic plot. The Complication is that group of events which precedes the decisive turn of fortune; the *Dénouement* is that group of events which follows it. In strictness, and according to the definition of ch. vii., the 'beginning' of the play should be also the 'beginning' of the Complication. But the Complication, according to ch. xviii., frequently includes τὰ ἔξωθεν,<sup>2</sup>—certain

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ix. 10. Cf. p. 157 note.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xviii. 1, τὰ μὲν ἔξωθεν καὶ ἔνια τῶν ἔσωθεν πολλάκις ἢ δέσις, τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν ἢ λύσις (where, however, Ueberweg's transposition, τὰ μὲν ἔξωθεν πολλάκις καὶ ἔνια τῶν ἔσωθεν ἢ δέσις, if not absolutely necessary, gives the more natural order of the words).

incidents external to the action proper, but pre-supposed in the drama, and affecting the development of the piece. With plays before him like the *Oedipus Tyrannus* and the *Ajax*, Aristotle even at the cost of some inconsistency admits such external incidents to form part of the dramatic entanglement. It is in some measure owing to this practice of the Greek theatre that an ancient tragedy often resembles the concluding acts of a modern play. We begin almost at the climax: the action proper is highly compressed and concentrated, and forms the last moment of a larger action hastening to its close.

If the analytical method of Aristotle in ch. vi., and his artificial isolation of the several elements of tragedy, are in themselves liable to mislead the reader, the rules of chapters vii. and viii. ought to correct any erroneous impression that may arise. The thought that here stands out above all others is that of the organic structure of the drama. Further, it becomes apparent that the recurring phrase of the *Poetics*, *σύστασις* (or *σύνθεσις*) *τῶν πραγμάτων*, does not denote a mechanical piecing together of incidents, but a vital union of the parts.<sup>1</sup> But, it may be asked, how is the organic unity revealed? From what point of view can we most clearly realise it?

If we have rightly apprehended the general tenor

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 339.

of Aristotle's teaching in the *Poetics*, unity—he would say—is manifested mainly in two ways. First, in the causal connexion that binds together the several parts of a play,—the thoughts, the emotions, the decisions of the will, the external events being inextricably interwoven. Secondly, in the fact that the whole series of events, with all the moral forces that are brought into collision, are directed to a single end. The action as it advances converges on a definite point. The thread of purpose running through it becomes more marked. All minor effects are subordinated to the sense of an ever growing unity. The end is linked to the beginning with inevitable certainty, and in the end we discern the meaning of the whole — τὸ τέλος μέγιστον πάντων.<sup>1</sup> In this powerful and concentrated impression lies the supreme test of unity.

Aristotle's conception of the unity of plan essential to the drama could not be much better summed up than in the following extract from Lowell:<sup>2</sup>—‘In a play we not only expect a succession of scenes, but that each scene should lead, by a logic more or less stringent, if not to the next, at any rate to something that is to follow, and that all should contribute their fraction of impulse towards the inevitable catastrophe.

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* vi. 10.

<sup>2</sup> J. R. Lowell, *The Old English Dramatists*, p. 11.

That is to say, the structure should be organic, with a necessary and harmonious connexion and relation of parts, and not merely mechanical, with an arbitrary or haphazard joining of one part to another. It is in the former sense alone that any production can be called a work of art.'

The general law of unity laid down in the *Poetics* for an epic poem is almost the same as for the drama ; but the drama forms a more compact and serried whole. Its events are in more direct relation with the development of character ; its incidents are never incidents and nothing more. The sequence of the parts is more inevitable—morally more inevitable—than in a story where the external facts and events have an independent value of their own. And though the modern drama, unlike the ancient, aspires to a certain epic fulness of treatment, it cannot violate the determining conditions of dramatic form.

The epic, being of wider compass, can admit many episodes, which serve to fill in the pauses of the action, or diversify the interest.<sup>1</sup> They give what Aristotle calls *ποικιλία*,<sup>2</sup> embellishment and variety to the narrative. The epic moreover advances slowly, and introduces 'retarding' incidents,—

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xxiii. 3, ἐπεισοδίοις οἷς διαλαμβάνει τὴν ποίησιν. xxiv. 4, τὸ μεταβάλλειν τὸν ἀκούοντα καὶ ἐπεισοδιοῦν ἀνομοίοις ἐπεισοδίοις.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xxiii. 3.

incidents by which the *Dénouement* is delayed, and the mental strain for the time relieved, only to be intensified again when the climax comes. Further, owing to the number of its minor actions, the epic, while keeping its essential unity, contains the plots of many tragedies ; in the phrase of Aristotle, it is *πολύμυθος* :<sup>1</sup> whereas the drama rejects this multiplicity of incidents ; it is of closer tissue, pressing forward to an end which controls its entire structure. By the very conditions also of dramatic representation a play cannot, except through the mouth of messengers or by similar means, place before us other than successive events. The epic, by virtue of its narrative form, can describe actions that are simultaneous.<sup>2</sup> Thus the *Odyssey*, after a long interval, resumes the main story, which had been left in suspense ; simultaneous and collateral incidents are narrated with much fulness of detail, and the scattered threads bound together in the unity of a single and accelerating action.

The action, then, of the drama is concentrated, while that of the epic is large and manifold. The

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xviii. 4, *χρὴ δὲ ὅπερ εἴρηται πολλάκις μεμνηῖσθαι καὶ μὴ ποιεῖν ἐποποιικὸν σύστημα τραγῳδίαν. ἐποποιικὸν δὲ λέγω τὸ πολύμυθον κ.τ.λ.*

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xiv. 4, *ἔχει δὲ . . . πολὺ τι ἢ ἐποποιία ἴδιον διὰ τὸ ἐν μὲν τῇ τραγῳδίᾳ μὴ ἐνδέχεσθαι ἅμα πραττόμενα πολλὰ μέρη μιμείσθαι ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν μέρος μόνον· ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐποποιίᾳ διὰ τὸ διήγησιν εἶναι ἔστι πολλὰ μέρη ἅμα ποιεῖν περαινόμενα.*

primary difference of form is here a governing fact in the development of the two varieties of poetry. The epic is a story of the past, the drama a representation in the present. The epic storyteller can take his time; his imagination travels backward to a remote distance, and there expatiates at will. He surveys the events of a past, which is already a closed book. If he happens to be the rhapsodist of an early society, he and his audience alike have time immeasurable at their command, he to tell, and they to listen. 'Behold,' says King Alcinous in the *Odyssey*, 'the night is of great length unspeakable, and the time for sleep in the hall is not yet; tell me therefore of those wondrous deeds. I could abide even till the bright dawn, so long as thou couldst endure to rehearse me these woes of thine in the hall.'<sup>1</sup> That is the true temper of the epic audience. They will listen through the night, and next day desire to take up the tale again.

The conditions of the drama are the opposite of all this. The spectacle of an action evolving itself in the present is very different from the leisurely recital of an event that has happened in the past. The impressions are more vivid in proportion to their nearness. Nay, so vivid do they become that the spectator, living in the present, becomes almost one with the hero whose fortunes he follows. He is impatient to see the sequel: he cannot listen to

<sup>1</sup> *Odys.* xi. 373-6.

long stories, to adventures unconnected with that in which the central interest lies. The action which rivets his attention is hastening towards its goal. By the very fact that the dramatic struggle and catastrophe take place before his eyes, the action gains a rapidity, partly dramatic, partly lyric, that is alien to the epic poem.

The only dramatic Unity enjoined by Aristotle is Unity of Action. It is strange that this should still need to be repeated. So inveterate, however, is a literary tradition, once it has been established under the sanction of high authority, that we still find the 'Three Unities' spoken of in popular writings as a rule of the *Poetics*.

It may be interesting here to cast a rapid glance over the history of this famous literary superstition.<sup>1</sup>

The doctrine of the 'Unity of Time,' or as it was sometimes called the 'Unity of the Day,' rests on one passage in the *Poetics*,<sup>2</sup> and one only.

<sup>1</sup> For the early history of this doctrine see Breitingen, *Les Unités d'Aristote avant le Cid de Corneille* (Genève 1879); and for its history in France, Ad. Ebert, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der Französische Tragödie, vornehmlich in 16. Jahrhundert* (Gotha 1856).

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* v. 4, ἔτι δὲ τῷ μήκει, <ἐπεὶ> ἡ μὲν (sc. ἡ τραγωδία) ὅτι μάλιστα πειρᾶται ὑπὸ μίαν περίοδον ἡλίου εἶναι ἢ μικρὸν ἐξαιλάττειν, ἡ δὲ ἐποποιία ἀόριστος τῷ χρόνῳ, καὶ τούτῳ διαφέρει· καίτοι τὸ πρῶτον ὁμοίως ἐν ταῖς τραγωδίαις τοῦτο ἐποιοῦν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἔπειν.

Teichmüller (*Arist. Forsch.* pp. 206 ff.) attempts to show not only that μῆκος here is the external length of the poem, but also

'Epic poetry and tragedy differ, again, in the length of the action: for tragedy endeavours, as far as possible, to confine itself to a single revolution of the sun, or but slightly to exceed this limit; whereas the epic action has no limits of time.' We have

that χρόνος is the actual time taken in recitation (or representation), as distinct from the ideal or imaginary time over which the action extends. He seems to prove his case with respect to μῆκος, which invariably in the *Poetics* means external length. But his view of χρόνος is open apparently to fatal objections, the chief of which are these:—(1) μίαν περίοδον ἡλίου can hardly express the day of twelve hours. The word περίοδος as applied to a heavenly body always means its *full orbit*, its motion from a given starting-point back again to the same point. This periphrasis, instead of the simple phrase μίαν ἡμέραν, seems expressly designed to indicate that the day of twenty-four hours—ἡμέρα together with νύξ—is meant. (2) As has been shown by Ribbeck, *Rhein. Mus.* 24, p. 135, the parenthetical remark, τὸ πρῶτον ὁμοίως ἐν ταῖς τραγωδίαις τοῦτο ἐποίουν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἔπεισιν, tells strongly against Teichmüller. The reference must be to the imaginary time of the action in the play itself. (3) τραγῳδία throughout the *Poetics* is used for tragedy as a distinct species of poetry, or for a particular tragedy,—never for the tragic performance including a tetralogy. (4) μάλιστα περιᾶται loses almost all point if the χρόνος is external time, and if ἐπὶ μίαν . . . εἶναι instead of its natural sense 'fall within,' 'be comprised within,' is forced to mean 'occupy,' or 'fill up,' twelve hours of daylight.

The translation adopted in the text follows Ueberweg's explanation. μῆκος is (with Teichmüller) referred to the actual length of the poem, but χρόνος to the internal time of the action. The difference in the length of a poem is made to depend on a difference in the time occupied by the action. Roughly speaking, such a relation generally exists, at least in the drama. But it is far from being a strict rule.

In forming this conclusion on a passage which is still not without difficulty, I have had the advantage of some correspondence with Prof. Bywater.



here a rough generalisation as to the practice of the Greek stage. The imaginary time of the dramatic action is limited, as far as may be, to the day of twenty-four hours. The practice, however, did not always exist. In the earlier days of tragedy, as the next sentence shows, the time-limit was ignored in the tragic no less than in the epic action.

No strict rule is here laid down. A certain historic fact is recorded,—a prevailing, but not an invariable usage. The effort of tragedy was in this direction, though the result could not always be achieved. Even in the developed Attic drama several exceptions to the practice are to be found. In the *Eumenides* months or years elapse between the opening of the play and the next scene. The *Trachiniae* of Sophocles and the *Supplikes* of Euripides afford other and striking instances of the violation of the so-called rule. In the *Agamemnon*, even if a definite interval of days cannot be assumed between the fire-signals announcing the fall of Troy, and the return of Agamemnon, at any rate the conditions of time are disregarded and the march of events is imaginatively accelerated.<sup>1</sup> As for the 'Unity of

<sup>1</sup> On the time-question in the *Agamemnon* see an article by Prof. Lewis Campbell in the *Classical Review*, vol. iv. 303-5. On the general question of 'The Unity of Time' see Verrall, *Ion of Eurip.* Intr. pp. xlviii ff. (Cambridge Press).

Place,' this too was a stage-practice, generally observed in the Greek drama but sometimes neglected, more especially in comedy: it is nowhere even hinted at in the *Poetics*, and, as a rule of art, has been deduced by the critics from the Unity of Time.<sup>1</sup>

There are several very obvious reasons for the general observance of the minor Unities in Greek tragedy. The simple and highly concentrated movement of a Greek play seldom demanded, or even permitted, a change of place or intervals between the scenes. Such breaks would, as a rule, have been liable to disturb the impression of the unity of the whole. Moreover, as has been often remarked, the Chorus formed an ideal bond of union between the separate parts of the action. Lessing suggests<sup>2</sup> that the limitations of time and place were necessary in order that the Chorus might not seem to be kept too long away from their homes. But if once we realise the painful

<sup>1</sup> The formal recognition of the *Unity of Place* as a third Unity dates from Castelvetro's first edition of the *Poetics* in 1570: see an article by H. Breiting in *Revue Critique* 1879, ii. pp. 478-80. In the same article two other points are noted: (1) that Castelvetro adopts the theory put forward in the *Poetik* published 1561 from the remains of J. C. Scaliger, identifying the time of the action with that of the representation; (2) that Sir Philip Sidney in his *Apologie for Poetrie*, written soon after 1580 and published in 1595, derived from Castelvetro many of the arguments and examples by which he maintains his vigorous defence of the Three Unities.

<sup>2</sup> *Hamb. Dram. Trans.* (Bohn) p. 369.

fact that these worthy men are kept standing, it may be for twenty-four hours, fasting and in one place, our distress will not be perceptibly augmented if the action is prolonged to thirty-six or forty-eight hours. Still, it is true that the constant presence of the same group of actors in a theatre where there was no drop-scene, no division into Acts, did naturally lead to the representation of a continuous and unbroken action.

From this point of view the presence of the Chorus tended towards Unity of Place and Unity of Time. From another point of view the Chorus releases us from the captivity of time. The interval covered by a choral ode is one whose value is just what the poet chooses to make it. While the time occupied by the dialogue has a relation more or less exact to real time, the choral lyrics suspend the outward action of the play, and carry us still farther away from the world of reality. What happens in the interval cannot be measured by any ordinary reckoning; it is much or little as the needs of the piece demand. A change of place directly obtrudes itself on the senses, but time is only what it appears to the mind. The imagination travels easily over many hours; and in the Greek drama the time that elapses during the songs of the Chorus is entirely idealised.

In interpreting the passage of the *Poetics* above quoted (ch. v. 4), the earlier critics dealt

- very loosely with the Greek. *πειρᾶται ἡ τραγῳδία* says Aristotle. Corneille and D'Aubignac translate *πειρᾶται* by *doit*, and thereby convert the general statement of fact at once into a rule. Successive commentators repeated the error. But the stress of the controversy gathered round another point. What is the meaning of the phrase *μὴν περίοδοι ἡλίου*, 'a single revolution of the sun'?<sup>1</sup> Is it the day of twenty-four hours, or the day of twelve hours? The Italian critics were divided on this question; so too were the French. Corneille declared in favour of twenty-four hours; but proposed, by a stretch of the rule, to allow thirty hours; and even this limit he thought hampering. He wavers curiously between the true poetic view as to the ideal management of time, and the principle of poetic illusion—or rather deception—so widely held by his contemporaries, that the more exact the reproduction of the conditions of reality, the better the art.

At one moment he says that, if the representation lasts two hours, the dramatic action ought to be the same length, that the resemblance may be perfect. If, however, the action cannot with due regard to probability be compressed into two hours, he would allow it to run to four or six or ten hours, but not much beyond the twenty-four

<sup>1</sup> See p. 284 note.

<sup>2</sup> Corneille, Discours iii. *Des Trois Unités*.

Might it not have occurred to him that long before the extreme limit of twenty-four or thirty hours was reached, the principle of a life-like imitation of reality would have been surrendered? No sooner, however, has he enunciated the rule than his instincts as a poet get the upper hand, and he writes: 'Above all I would leave the length of the action to the imagination of the hearers, and never determine the time, if the subject does not require it. . . . What need is there to mark at the opening of the play that the sun is rising, that it is noon at the third act, and sunset at the end of the last?'

Dacier<sup>1</sup> disputes the view that the 'single revolution of the sun' means a day of twenty-four hours. He holds it to be monstrous and against common sense; 'it would ruin the verisimilitude.' He fixes twelve hours as the extreme limit of the dramatic action, but these may be either in the night or in the day, or half in one and half in the other.<sup>2</sup> In the perfect tragedy—and here he agrees with Corneille—the time of the action and of the representation should coincide. He roundly asserts that this was an indispensable law of Greek tragedy,<sup>3</sup> though this statement is afterwards

<sup>1</sup> Dacier on Aristotle's *Poetics*, ch. v. note 21, Trans. (London 1705).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. D'Aubignac's translation of ἡ μικρὸν ἐξαλλάττειν, 'ou de changer un peu ce temps,' i.e. to change from day to night or from night to day.

<sup>3</sup> Dacier on *Poetics*, ch. vii. note 14.

qualified. If, owing to the nature of the subject, the poet cannot observe the rule of strict equivalence, he may have recourse to 'verisimilitude'; and this is stated to be the Aristotelian principle: 'Aristotle supplied the defect of necessity by probability.'<sup>1</sup> Thus the law of the *εἰκός* and *ἀναγκαῖον* in the *Poetics* degenerates into a device which may lead the audience to imagine that the scene on the stage is a facsimile of real life. The fallacious principle that the dramatic imitation is meant to be in some sense a deception,<sup>2</sup> is at the basis of all these strange reasonings as to the possible equivalence between real and imaginary time. The idea exists in Corneille.<sup>3</sup> It is pushed to its extreme by Dacier and Batteux. Even Voltaire commits himself to the absurd position that 'if the poet represents a conspiracy and makes the

<sup>1</sup> Dacier on *Poetics*, ch. vii. note 18. Here the *ἀναγκαῖον* of Aristotle becomes the exact equivalence of the time of the action with the time of the representation: the *εἰκός* becomes the verisimilitude which in default of such equivalence 'will cheat the audience, who will not pry so narrowly as to mind what is behind the scenes, provided there be nothing too extravagant.'

<sup>2</sup> 'It is false that any representation is mistaken for reality; that any dramatic fable, in its materiality, was ever credible, or for a single moment was ever credited.'—Dr Johnson, *Preface to Shakespeare*.

<sup>3</sup> With regard to Unity of Place Corneille says: 'Cela aiderait à tromper l'auditeur, qui ne voyant rien qui lui marquât la diversité des lieux, ne s'en apercevrait pas, à moins d'une reflexion malicieuse et critique, dont il y en a peu qui soient capables' (*Disc. iii.*)

action to last fourteen days, he must account to me for all that takes place in those fourteen days.'<sup>1</sup>

Unity of Place was generally held to follow as a corollary from Unity of Time.<sup>2</sup> Corneille, the first French poet who rigorously observes the rule, admits that he finds no such precept in Aristotle.<sup>3</sup> In defending it he is driven to desperate shifts, which end in a kind of compromise. He points

<sup>1</sup> So Dacier on *Poetics*, ch. xviii, note 3: 'Mr. Corneille is satisfied that the audience should know why the actors go out of the place where the scene is laid; but he does not think it necessary to know what they do during the intervals, neither that 'tis required that the actors should do anything during the intervals, but is persuaded that they may sleep then, if they please, and not break the continuity of the action. We find just the contrary according to Aristotle's principles, and that it ceases to be a tragedy when 'tis so, for this would certainly ruin all the probability, if the audience did not know what the actors were doing during the intervals; and if the actors have nothing to do, pray what does the audience stay for? 'tis very odd to expect the sequel of an action, when the actors have nothing more to do, and to be interested in a thing, which the actors are so little concerned in, that they may go to sleep.' It is needless to say, there is not a trace of all this in Aristotle.

<sup>2</sup> Voltaire derives it from Unity of Action on the strangely illogical ground that 'no one action can go on in several places at once.' But surely a single action can go on in several places *successively*.

<sup>3</sup> Others who had never read the *Poetics* were not slow to assert that all the Unities are there enjoined. Frederick the Great (on *German Literature*) ridicules the plays of Shakespeare as ridiculous farces, worthy of the savages of Canada; they offend against all the rules of the stage. 'For these rules are not arbitrary; you will find them in the *Poetics* of Aristotle, where Unity of Place, Unity of Time, and Unity of Interest are prescribed as the only means of making tragedy interesting.'

out that the moderns are met by a difficulty the ancients did not encounter. The Greeks could make their kings meet and speak in public. In France such a familiarity was impossible; royal personages could not be brought forth from the seclusion of their chambers; nor could private confidences be exchanged anywhere but in the private apartments of the several characters. He would, therefore, admit some extension of the rule. He would allow a change of scene, provided that the action represented took place within a single town, and that the scene was not shifted in the same act. Again, the place must be alluded to only under its general name—Paris, Rome, or the like—and the stage decoration must remain unaltered so far as this local area is concerned.

- ✓ Such were the anxious and minute contrivances which a great poet devised to enable the imagination to do its proper work. The principle, as Batteux carefully explained, was that if the scene of the action is changed while the spectator remains in one place, he will be reminded that he is assisting at an unreal performance; the imitation will be so far defective.

Far better—we feel—in the interests of the dramatic art was the practice of the Shakespearian theatre,—the bare stage without movable scenery, and the frank surrender of all attempt to cheat the senses. The poet simply invoked the aid of the



imagination to carry his hearers through space and time; to

‘digest  
The abuse of distance, . . .’  
‘jumping o’er times,  
Turning the accomplishment of many years  
Into an hour-glass.’

The problem of the ‘Unities’ cannot, indeed, have presented itself to Aristotle in its modern lights. But even if he had known what was to be written on the subject, he would, doubtless, have taken his stand no less decisively on the fundamental Unity of Action, and refrained from laying down any binding rules for change of scene or lapse of time. If Unity of Action is preserved, the other Unities will take care of themselves. Unity of Action is indeed in danger of being impaired by marked discontinuity of place or time. There are Spanish dramas in which the hero is born in Act i., and appears again on the scene as an old man at the close of the play. The missing spaces are almost of necessity filled in by the undramatic expedient of narrating what has occurred in the intervals. Yet even here all depends on the art of the dramatist. Years may elapse between successive acts without the unity being destroyed, as we see from *The Winter’s Tale*.

After all, the drama is not possible without a certain idealisation of place and time. If the poet

has once succeeded in transporting us to a far-off land and a distant age—to ancient Rome or Athens—we are not inclined to quarrel with him as to the number of hours or days over which the dramatic action extends. We do not ask at the end of each act, what the hour is by poet's time; and, should we seek to discover it from indications in the play, our curiosity will for the most part be baffled. There is no calendar for such a reckoning, no table of equivalent hours in the real and the ideal world. It is part of the poet's art to make us forget all time; and, if in his company we lose count of months and years, we do not cry out against the impossibility. For, on the one hand, the imagination is not to be cheated by puerile devices into the belief that its world is the world of reality: on the other, we can hardly place any limit on the demands to which it will respond, if only these demands are made by one who knows how. Shakespeare deals freely, and as he will, with place and time; yet he is generally nearer to the doctrine of the *Poetics* than those who fancied they wrote in strict accordance with the rules of that treatise.

French poets and writers on aesthetics did not derive their dramatic rules directly from the Greek models on which the *Poetics* of Aristotle are based. The genius of Rome was more congenial to them than that of Greece. Seneca, rather than Aeschylus or Sophocles, was the teacher of Corneille and Racine,

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and even Molière's comedy was powerfully affected by Plautus and Terence. The French, having learnt their three Unities from Roman writers, then sought to discover for them Aristotelian authority. They committed a further and graver error. Instead of resting the minor Unities of Time and Place on Unity of Action, they subordinated Unity of Action to the observance of the other rules. The result not unfrequently was to compress into a space of twelve or twenty-four hours a crowded sequence of incidents and a series of mental conflicts which needed a fuller development. The natural course of the action was cut short, and the inner consistency of character violated. A similar result followed from the scrupulous precautions taken to avoid a change of scene. The characters, instead of finding their way to the place where dramatic motives would have taken them, were compelled to go elsewhere, lest they should violate the Unities. The external rule was thus observed, but at the cost of that inward logic of character and events, which is prescribed by the *Poetics*. The failures and successes of the modern stage alike prove the truth of the Aristotelian principle, that Unity of Action is the higher and controlling law of the drama. The Unities of Time and Place, so far as they can claim any artistic importance, are of secondary and purely derivative value.


## CHAPTER VIII

### THE IDEAL TRAGIC HERO

WITH the exception of the definition of tragedy itself, probably no passage in the *Poetics* has given rise to so much criticism as the description of the ideal tragic hero in ch. xiii. The qualities requisite to such a character are here deduced from the primary fact that the function of tragedy is to produce the *katharsis* of pity and fear; pity being felt for a person who, if not wholly innocent, meets with suffering beyond his deserts; fear being awakened when the sufferer is a man of like nature with ourselves.<sup>1</sup> Tragic character must be exhibited through the medium of a plot which has the capacity of giving full satisfaction to these emotions. Certain types, therefore, of character and certain forms of catastrophe are at once excluded, as failing either in whole or in part to produce the tragic effect.

In the first place, the spectacle of a man

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 255 sqq.



eminently good<sup>1</sup> undergoing the change from prosperous to adverse fortune awakens neither pity nor fear. It shocks or repels us (*μιαρόν ἐστίν*). Next, and utterly devoid of tragic quality, is the representation of the bad man who experiences the contrary change from distress to prosperity. Pity and fear are here alike wanting. Even the sense of justice (*τὸ φιλάνθρωπον*)<sup>2</sup> is unsatisfied. The impression left by such a spectacle is, indeed, the

<sup>1</sup> The *ἐπαικὴς* of *Poet.* xiii. 2 is from the context to be identified with *ὁ ἀρετῇ διαφέρων καὶ δικαιοσύνη* of § 3.

<sup>2</sup> Vahlen here (ch. xiii. 2) takes *τὸ φιλάνθρωπον* in its ordinary sense, as human sympathy with suffering, even if the suffering be deserved, and the sympathy, therefore, fall short of *ἔλεος*. But the comparison of ch. xviii. 6 suggests a more special meaning. The outwitting of the clever rogue and the defeat of the brave villain are there given as instances of *τὸ φιλάνθρωπον*. It appears to denote that which gratifies the moral sense, which produces a feeling of satisfied justice. So it is taken by Zeller, Susemihl and others. Properly it is a sympathetic human feeling; and this may be evoked either by the sight of suffering (merited or unmerited), or by the punishment of the evil-doer. In *Rhet.* ii. 9. 1386 b 26 sympathy with unmerited suffering—namely, *ἔλεος*—has as its other side the sense of satisfaction over merited misfortune—what is here called *τὸ φιλάνθρωπον*. *ὁ μὲν γὰρ λυπούμενος ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀναξίως κακοπραγοῦσιν ἡσθήσεται ἢ ἄλπος ἐστὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐναντίως κακοπραγοῦσιν· οἷον τοὺς πατραλοίας καὶ μισαιφόνους, ὅταν τύχῃσι τιμωρίας, οὐδεὶς ἂν λυπηθεὶ χρηστός· δεῖ γὰρ χαίρειν ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις.* Mr. Lock has given me an interesting illustration of *φιλάνθρωπον* in the meaning here assigned to it from the Book of Wisdom i. 6, *φιλάνθρωπον γὰρ πνεῦμα σοφία καὶ οὐκ ἀθώσκει τὸν βλάσφημον.*

With *φιλάνθρωπον*, 'satisfying to human feeling,' may be compared the later use of the word (common e.g. in Plutarch), of 'pleasing,' 'gratifying,' in a more general way.

exact opposite of *ἔλεος*, 'pity': it is that which the Greeks denoted by *νέμεσις*, the righteous anger or moral indignation excited by undeserved good fortune.<sup>1</sup> Again, there is the overthrow of the utter villain (*ὁ σφόδρα πονηρός*),—a catastrophe that satisfies the moral sense, but is lacking in the higher and distinctively tragic qualities. Lastly, Aristotle mentions the case which in his view answers all the requirements of art. It is that of a man [who morally stands midway between the two extremes. He is not eminently good or just, though he leans to the side of goodness.<sup>2</sup> He is involved in misfortune, not, however, as the result of deliberate vice, but through some great flaw of character or fatal error in conduct.<sup>3</sup> He is, moreover, illustrious in rank and fortune; the chief motive, no doubt, for this requirement being that the signal nature of the catastrophe may be more strikingly exhibited]

Another possible case remains, though it is not among those here enumerated. The good man may be represented as passing from adversity to prosperity. On Aristotle's principles this would

<sup>1</sup> *Rhet.* ii. 9. 1386 b 9, ἀντίκειται δὲ τῷ ἔλεειν μάλιστα μὲν ὁ καλοῦσι νεμεσᾶν· τῇ γὰρ λυπεῖσθαι ἐπὶ ταῖς ἀναξίαις κακοπραγίαις ἀντικείμενόν ἐστι τρόπον τινὰ καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἡθους τὸ λυπεῖσθαι ἐπὶ ταῖς ἀναξίαις εὐπραγίαις.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 4, βελτίονος μᾶλλον ἢ χείρονος.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 3, μήτε διὰ κακίαν καὶ μοχθηρίαν μεταβάλλων εἰς τὴν δυστυχίαν ἀλλὰ δι' ἁμαρτίαν τινά. xiii. 4, μὴ διὰ μοχθηρίαν ἀλλὰ δι' ἁμαρτίαν μεγάλην.

fail to produce the proper tragic effect ; for, though in the course of the action we may be profoundly moved by the spectacle of threatened ruin, the total impression is alien to tragedy. The 'happy ending,' frequent as it is in Greek and in all dramatic literature, comes under the same general censure as attaches to a plot with a double thread of interest, and a double catastrophe,—prosperity for the good, misfortune for the bad.<sup>1</sup> Aristotle observes that 'owing to the weakness of the audience' a play so constructed generally passes as the best.<sup>2</sup> The effect is that of τὸ φιλάνθρωπον

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 7, δευτέρα δ' ἡ πρώτη λεγομένη ὑπὸ τινῶν ἐστὶν [σύστασις] ἢ διπλὴν τε τὴν σύστασιν ἔχουσα, κάθ' ὅσον ἡ Ὀδύσσεια, καὶ τελευτῶσα ἐξ ἐναντίας τοῖς βελτίοσι καὶ χείροσιν.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 7, δοκεῖ δὲ εἶναι πρώτη διὰ τὴν τῶν θεάτρων ἀσθένειαν. Cf. Twining ii. 116, 'Chaucer's monk had the true Aristotelic idea of Tragedy :—

Tragedie is to sayn a certain storie,  
As olde books maken us memorie,  
Of him that stood in great prosperitee,  
And is yfallen out of high degree  
In to miserie, and endeth wretchedly.

But the knight and the host were among the θεῖα καὶ ἀσθενεῖς :

Ho ! quod the knight, good sire, no more of this :  
That ye have said is right ynough ywis,  
And mochel more ; for litel heviness  
Is right enough to mochel folk, I gesse.  
I say for me, it is a gret disese,  
Wher as men have ben in gret welth and ese,  
To heren of hir soden fall, alas !  
And the contrary is joye and gret solas,  
As when a man has ben in poure estat,  
And climbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,

above mentioned : reward and punishment are in exact correspondence with desert. He himself

And ther abideth in prosperitee ;  
Swiche thing is gladsom, as it thinketh me,  
And of swiche thing were goodly for to telle.'

The Aristotelian view is maintained in *Spectator* No. 40, *Tatler* No. 82. On the other hand cf. Dryden, *Preface to Spanish Friar* : 'It is not so easy a business to make a tragedy end happily ; for 'tis more difficult to save than it is to kill. The dagger and the cup of poison are always in readiness, but to bring the action to the last extremity, and then by probable means to recover all, will require the art and judgment of a writer and cost him many a pang in the performance.'

Dr. Johnson gives expression to the extreme view of 'poetical justice' in his criticism of *King Lear* (vol. ii. 164-5). 'Shakespeare has suffered the virtue of Cordelia to perish in a just cause, contrary to the natural idea of justice, to the hope of the reader, and what is yet more strange, to the faith of chronicles. Yet this conduct is justified by the *Spectator*, who blames Tate for giving Cordelia success and happiness in his alteration, and declares that, in his opinion, the tragedy has lost half its beauty. Dennis has remarked, whether justly or not, that to secure the favourable reception of *Cato*, the town was poisoned with much false and abominable criticism, and that endeavours had been used to discredit and decry poetical justice. A play in which the wicked prosper, and the virtuous miscarry, may doubtless be good, because it is a just representation of the events of human life : but since all reasonable beings naturally love justice, I cannot easily be persuaded, that the observation of justice makes a play worse ; or that if other excellencies are equal, the audience will not always rise the better pleased for the triumph of persecuted virtue. In the present case the public has decided. Cordelia from the time of Tate has always retired with victory and felicity. And if my sensations could add anything to the general suffrage, I might relate, I was many years ago so shocked by Cordelia's death, that I know not whether I ever endured again to read the last scenes of the play till I undertook to revise them as an editor.'



regards the pleasure hence derived as proper rather to comedy, where all discords are reconciled, the bitterest foes part as friends, 'no one slays or is slain':<sup>1</sup>—or, as Goethe in a similar context puts it, 'no one dies, every one is married.'

The stress laid in this chapter on the unhappy ending is the key to the striking phrase in which Euripides, with all his faults of dramatic structure, is pronounced to be 'still the most tragic of poets.'<sup>2</sup> The saying must be read along with

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 8. Cf. Schol. on Eurip. *Orest.* p. 347 (Dind.), ἡ κατάληξις τῆς τραγωδίας ἢ εἰς θρῆνον ἢ εἰς πάθος καταλίνει, ἢ δὲ τῆς κωμωδίας εἰς σπονδὰς καὶ διαλλαγάς, ὅθεν ὁράται τόδε τὸ δράμα κωμικῇ καταλήξει χρησάμενον· διαλλαγαὶ γὰρ πρὸς Μενέλαον καὶ Ὀρέστην. Arg. to *Alcest.* p. 87. 9 (Dind.), τὸ δὲ δράμα ἐστὶ σατυρικώτερον, ὅτι εἰς χαρὰν καὶ ἡδονὴν καταστρέφει· παρὰ τοῖς τραγικοῖς ἐκβάλλεται ὡς ἀνοίκεια τῆς τραγικῆς ποιήσεως ὅ τε Ὀρέστης καὶ ἡ Ἀλκηστις ὡς ἐκ συμφορᾶς μὲν ἀρχόμενα, εἰς εὐδαιμονίαν δὲ καὶ χαρὰν λήξαντα. ἐστὶ δὲ μᾶλλον κωμωδίας ἐχόμενα.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 6, ὁ Εὐριπίδης εἰ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα μὴ εὖ οἰκονομεῖ ἀλλὰ τραγικώτατός γε τῶν ποιητῶν φαίνεται. The praise is here further limited by the consideration that the effectiveness of his tragedies depends on stage representation and on good acting: ἐπὶ γὰρ τῶν σκηνῶν καὶ τῶν ἀγώνων τραγικώταται αἱ τοιαῦται φαίνονται, ἂν κατορθωθῶσιν.

The 'powerful tragic effect' on the stage (τραγικώταται φαίνονται, τραγικώτατός γε φαίνεται) is a serious reservation for Aristotle to make, for he requires a good tragedy to produce its proper effect merely by reading, ch. xiv. 1. See Susemihl (Introd. p. 29), who also compares the use of τραγικός in a somewhat restricted sense in the two other passages where it occurs in the *Poetics*,—xiv. 7, τό τε γὰρ μιᾶρὸν ἔχει, καὶ οὐ τραγικόν· ἀπαθὲς γάρ (where τραγικόν implies tragic disaster), and xviii. 5 (applied to Agathon), τραγικὸν γὰρ τοῦτο καὶ φιλόθρῳπον. Its limitation in the latter

certain limiting expressions in the context, and in other passages of the *Poetics*. But whatever deductions may have to be made from the force of the phrase, the estimate of Euripides here given is directly connected<sup>1</sup> by Aristotle with the preference of the poet for the true tragic ending.

Reverting now to the several types of excluded characters, we may consider Aristotle's conclusions more in detail. First, the ἐπιεικής or perfectly blameless character is deemed unfit to be a tragic hero on the ground that wholly unmerited suffering causes repulsion, not fear or pity. Why, we may ask, not pity? Surely we feel pity for one who is in the highest sense ἀνάξιος, an innocent sufferer? In reply it has been sometimes said that such persons themselves despise the pain of suffering; they enjoy so much inward consolation that they have no need of our sympathy. 'Si vis me flere dolendum est primum ipsi tibi.' This may appear a cynical reflection, though it can be so

passage is very remarkable in connexion with φιλόανθρωπον. The discomfiture of the wicked man, there spoken of, does not answer to the true tragic idea; it merely 'satisfies the moral sense'; so that τραγικόν can hardly mean much more than strikingly dramatic. In ch. xiii. 6 the chief thought is the pathetic and moving power of Euripides. Cf. *Probl.* xviii. 6. 918 a 10, διὰ τί ἡ παρακαταλογία ἐν ταῖς ψδαῖς τραγικόν; where παθητικόν in the next line is used as an equivalent. In Plato *Rep.* x. 602 B, τοὺς τε τῆς τραγικῆς ποιήσεως ἀπομένους ἐν ἰαμβείοις καὶ ἐν ἔπεισι, the word includes the sad narratives of epic poetry as well as of tragedy.

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 6, διὸ καὶ κ.τ.λ.

put as to convey a real truth. The pity we feel for outward misfortune may be sunk in our admiration for the courage with which it is borne. Aristotle's answer, however, would probably be different. He too would say that pity is expelled by a stronger feeling; as in the *Rhetoric* 'terror tends to drive out pity.'<sup>1</sup> But the mention here of τὸ μισῶν suggests that the sense of outraged justice would displace the softer emotions. Lessing, agreeing with Aristotle on the main point, takes occasion to enforce his own favourite theory—not Aristotelian—which attributes a direct moral purpose to tragedy. He speaks of the 'mere thought in itself so terrible, that there should be human beings who can be wretched without any guilt of their own.'<sup>2</sup>

The unqualified rejection of such a theme as unsuited to tragedy may well surprise us. Aristotle had not to go beyond the Greek stage to find a guiltless heroine whose death does not shock the moral sense. Nothing but a misplaced ingenuity, or a resolve at all costs to import a moral lesson into the drama, can discover in Antigone any fault or failing which entailed on her suffering as its due penalty. She was so placed that she had to choose between contending duties; but who can doubt that she chose aright? She sacrificed the

<sup>1</sup> *Rhet.* ii. 8. 1386 a 21, quoted supra p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Lessing, *Hamb. Dram. Trans.* (Bohn) p. 435.

*figone*

lower duty to the higher; and if, in so doing, her conduct fell short of formal perfection, the defect lay in the inherent one-sidedness of all human action in an imperfect world. Hers was a 'sinless crime,'<sup>1</sup> nor could Aristotle on his own principles call her other than *ἐπιεικής*, 'good' in the fullest sense of the word.

Yet his reluctance to admit a perfect character to the place of the protagonist has been almost justified by the history of the tragic drama. Such a character has been rarely chosen, and still more rarely has been successful. But the reason assigned in this passage does not appear to be the true one. Blameless goodness has seldom the quality needed to make it dramatically interesting. It wants the motive power which leads to decisive acts of will, which impels others to action and produces a collision of forces. Dramatic character implies some self-assertive energy. It is not a rounded or perfect whole; it realises itself within a limited sphere, and presses forward passionately in a single direction. It has generally a touch of egotism, by which it exercises a controlling influence over circumstances or over the wills of minor characters that are grouped around it. Goodness, on the other hand, with its unselfish, its self-effacing tendency, is apt to be immobile and uncombative. In refusing to strike back it brings

<sup>1</sup> *Soph. Ant.* 74, *ὅσα πανουργήσας*.

the action to a standstill. Even where it has no lack of strong initiative, its impersonal ardour in the cause of right has not the same dramatic fascination as the spectacle of human weakness or passion, doing battle with the fate it has brought upon itself.

Mazzini conceived the idea of a new drama in which man shall no longer appear as a rebel against the laws of existence, or the victim of an external struggle with his own nature, but as the ally of Providence, co-operating with the powers of good in that secular conflict whose drama is the history of the world. We may doubt whether such a drama can in the true sense be tragic. The death of the martyr—of the hero who leads a forlorn hope—of the benefactor of mankind who bears suffering with unflinching fortitude, and through suffering achieves moral victory—fills us with emotions of wonder and admiration; but it can hardly produce the thrill of fear or tragic awe, which Aristotle rightly felt to be an indispensable factor in true tragedy.<sup>1</sup> The reason perhaps is that tragedy, in its pure idea, shows us a mortal will engaged in an unequal struggle with destiny, whether that destiny be represented by the forces within or without the mind. The conflict reaches

<sup>1</sup> Corneille (*Discours ii. De la Tragédie*) objects to banish martyrs from the stage, and adduces his own *Polixène* in support of his view—a very doubtful example.

its tragic issue when the individual perishes, but through his ruin the disturbed order of the world is restored and the moral forces re-assert their sway. The death of the martyr presents to us not the defeat, but the victory of the individual; the issue of a conflict in which the individual is ranged on the same side as the higher powers, and the sense of suffering consequently lost in that of moral triumph.

The next case is that of the bad man who is raised from adverse to prosperous fortune. This, says Aristotle, is most alien to the spirit of tragedy. No one will dispute the observation; though we cannot adopt Dacier's reason for accepting it. 'There is nothing more opposed to the refining of the passions than the prosperity of the wicked; instead of correcting, it nourishes and strengthens them; for who would take the trouble to get rid of his vices, if they made him happy?'<sup>1</sup> Good fortune following upon a course of bad actions is frequent enough in life; none the less it is to be rigorously excluded from tragic and, indeed, from all art. It may excite a lively sense of impending terror, though even this is denied by Aristotle. It certainly awakens no pity, and—we may add with Aristotle—it offends the sense of justice. Even granting that art must touch us through our aesthetic sensibility, and has nothing directly

<sup>1</sup> Dacier on *Poetics*, ch. xiii. Trans. (London 1705).

to do with the sense of justice, the aesthetic effect itself will be one of pain and disquiet; the doubt and disturbance which arise from the spectacle of real life will be reproduced and perhaps intensified. In the drama our view of the universe needs to be harmonised, not confused; we expect to find the connexion of cause and effect in a form that satisfies the rational faculty. To suspend the operation of the moral law by the triumph of wickedness is to introduce the reign of caprice or blind chance.

The overthrow of signal villainy is next set aside by Aristotle as unsuited to tragedy,—in spite, as he expressly says, of the satisfaction it offers to the moral sense. We cannot feel pity when the suffering is deserved; we cannot feel fear when the sufferer is so far removed in nature from ourselves. Here again the judgment of Aristotle, if tested by concrete examples, receives on the whole striking confirmation. Yet this is precisely one of the cases where the inadequacy of his rules is most apparent. The limitation of view arises from applying a purely ethical instead of an aesthetic standard to dramatic character. Crime as crime has, it is true, no place in art; it is common, it is ugly. But crime may be presented in another light. Wickedness on a grand scale, resolute and intellectual, may raise the criminal above the commonplace and invest him with a

sort of dignity. There is something terrible and sublime in mere will-power working its evil way, dominating its surroundings, with a superhuman energy. The wreck of such power excites in us a certain tragic sympathy; not indeed the genuineness which is inspired by unmerited suffering, but a sense of loss and regret over the waste or misuse of gifts so splendid.

*sublime*

It needs, however, the genius of a Shakespeare to portray this potent and commanding villainy—It was a perilous task to concentrate the whole interest of a play round a character such as Richard III.; and we may doubt whether Shakespeare himself would have ventured on it in the maturer period of his genius. The ancient drama offers nothing comparable to this great experiment—no such embodiment of an entirely depraved will—loveless and unhuman, fashioning all things with relentless adaptation to its own ends, yet standing sufficiently aloof from life to jest over it with savage humour. The wickedness of Richard III is on a different level from that of Iago. In Iago we have no heroic criminal, but a plotter of a meaner order, in whom the faculty of intrigue amounts almost to genius; coldly diabolical, more malignant even than Richard, and delighting in evil for its own sake. Richard, equally devoid of moral scruple, and glorying in his 'naked villainy,' is yet a prince with royal purposes and an insight into



affairs. His masterpieces of crime are forged by intellect and carried out with artistic finish and completeness. The moral sense is kept half in abeyance up to the close of such a drama. The badness of the man is almost lost in the sense of power. Tragic pity there cannot be for the protagonist; hardly even for his victims: terror and grandeur leave little room for any gentler feelings.

There is a certain 'contradiction,' Schiller observes,<sup>1</sup> 'between the aesthetic and the moral judgment.' 'Theft, for example, is a thing absolutely base . . . it is always an indelible brand stamped upon the thief, and aesthetically speaking he will always remain a base object. On this point taste is even less forgiving than morality, and its tribunal is more severe. . . . According to this view a man who robs would always be an object to be rejected by the poet who wishes to present serious pictures. But suppose this man is at the same time a murderer, he is even more to be condemned than before by the moral law. But in the aesthetic judgment he is raised one degree higher. . . . He who abases himself by a vile action can to a certain extent be raised by a crime, and can be thus reinstated in our aesthetic estimation. . . . In presence of a deep and horrible crime we no longer think of the quality but of

<sup>1</sup> Schiller's *Aesthetical Essays*, p. 251 (Bell and Sons).

the awful consequences of the action. . . . Directly we begin to tremble, all the delicacies of taste are reduced to silence. . . . In a word, the base element disappears in the terrible.'

Aristotle does not appear to have been alive to this effect of art. Still it must not be inferred from this passage, nor again from ch. xv.,<sup>1</sup> that all artistic portraiture of moral depravity is forbidden. The Menelaus of Euripides is twice cited as an example of character 'gratuitously bad,'<sup>2</sup> a phrase which implies that there may be a badness that is required by the dramatic motive and the structure of a play.<sup>3</sup> It will fall under the wider law which demands the light and shade of contrasted characters, —characters either standing out against one another in strong relief, or each forming the complement of the other. Thus we have such pairs as Antigone and Ismene, Odysseus and Neoptolemus, Lear and Gloucester, Hamlet and Laertes, Brutus and Antony. The principle once admitted will allow of the utmost divergence of ethical type. Aristotle admits the principle, but in a cursory and parenthetical manner, nor does he seem to have been aware of its range and significance.

We now come to the ideal protagonist of tragedy, as sketched in this chapter. He is composed of mixed elements, by no means supremely good, but a man 'like ourselves' (*ὅμοιος*). The expression, if

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xv. 1-2, 8.    <sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xv. 5, xxv. 19.    <sup>3</sup> See p. 224.

taken alone, might seem to describe a person of mediocre virtue and average powers. But Aristotle must not be read in detached sections; and the comparison of ch. ii. and ch. xv. with our passage shows us that this character, while it has its basis in reality, transcends it by a certain moral elevation.<sup>1</sup> We could wish that Aristotle had gone further and said explicitly, that in power, even more than in virtue, the tragic hero must be raised above the ordinary level; that he must possess a deeper vein of feeling, or heightened powers of intellect or will; that the morally trivial, rather than the morally bad, is fatal to tragic effect. As it is, we arrive at the result that the tragic hero is a man of noble nature, like ourselves in elemental feelings and emotions; idealised, indeed, but with so large a share of our common humanity as to enlist our eager interest and sympathy. He falls from a position of lofty eminence; and the disaster that wrecks his life may be traced not to deliberate wickedness, but to some great error or frailty.

This last expression is not free from difficulty, and has been variously interpreted. The word *ἀμαρτία* by usage admits of various shades of meaning. As a synonym of *ἀμάρτημα* and as applied to a single act,<sup>2</sup> it denotes an error due to inadequate

<sup>1</sup> See p. 230.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Aesch. *Prom.* 8,                      τοιαῦτά τοι  
ἀμαρτίας σφέ δέι θεοῖς δοῦναι δίκην.

knowledge of particular circumstances. According to strict usage we should add the qualification, that the circumstances are such as might have been known.<sup>1</sup> Thus it would cover any error of judgment arising from a hasty or careless view of the special case; an error which in some degree is morally culpable, as it might have been avoided. Error of this kind has the highest claim to pity or consideration.<sup>2</sup> But *ἀμαρτία* is also more laxly applied to an error due to unavoidable ignorance, for which the more proper term is *ἀτύχημα*, 'misfortune.'<sup>3</sup> In either case, however, the error is unintentional; it arises from want of knowledge; and its moral quality will depend on whether the individual is himself responsible for his ignorance.

Distinct from this, but still limited in its reference to a single act, is the moral *ἀμαρτία* proper, a fault or error where the act is conscious and

<sup>1</sup> *Eth. Nic.* v. 8. 1135 b 16, ὅταν μὲν οὖν παραλόγως ἡ βλάβη γένηται, ἀτύχημα· ὅταν δὲ μὴ παραλόγως, ἀνευ δὲ κακίας, ἀμάρτημα (ἀμαρτάνει μὲν γὰρ ὅταν ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐν αὐτῇ ἢ τῆς αἰτίας, ἀτυχεῖ δ' ὅταν ἐξωθεν). ὅταν δὲ εἰδῶς μὲν μὴ προβουλεύσας δέ, ἀδίκημα. Cf. *Rhet.* i. 13. 1374 b 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Eth. Nic.* iii. 2. 1110 b 33, ἡ καθ' ἕκαστα (ἀγνοια), ἐν οἷς καὶ περὶ αὐτῆς πράξεις· ἐν τούτοις γὰρ καὶ ἔλεος καὶ συγγνώμη· ὁ γὰρ τούτων τι ἀγνοῶν ἀκουσίως πράττει. iii. 1. 1109 b 31, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῖς ἀκουσίοις συγγνώμης (γυνομένης).

<sup>3</sup> In *Eth. Nic.* v. 8. 1135 b 12 τὰ μετ' ἀγνοίας ἀμαρτήματα include (a) αὐτῶν τις πράττει = ἀμαρτήματα proper, (b) αὐτῶν τις ἀγνοίαν τις πράττει = ἀτυχήματα.

intentional, but not deliberate. Such are acts committed in anger or passion.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, the word may denote a defect of character, distinct on the one hand from an isolated error or fault, and, on the other, from the vice which has its seat in a depraved will. This use, though rarer, is still Aristotelian.<sup>2</sup> Under this head would be included any human frailty or moral weakness, a flaw of character that is not tainted by a vicious purpose. In our passage, there is much to be said in favour of the last sense, as it is here brought into relation with other words of purely moral significance, words moreover which describe not an isolated act,<sup>3</sup> but a more permanent state.

flaw

<sup>1</sup> In *Eth. Nic.* v. 8. 1135 b 22 such an act is called an *ἀδίκημα*, but the agent is not *ἄδικος*: ταῦτα γὰρ βλάπτοντες καὶ ἁμαρτάνοντες ἄδικοῦσι μὲν, καὶ ἀδικήματά ἐστιν, οὐ μέντοι πῶς ἄδικοι διὰ ταῦτα οὐδὲ πονηροί. . . . διὸ καλῶς τὰ ἐκ θυμοῦ οὐκ ἐκ προνοίας κρίνεται. But in *Eth. Nic.* iii. 1. 1110 b 6 the man who acts in anger or drunkenness acts *ἄγνων* or οὐκ εἰδώς, though not δι' ἄγνοιαν: the acts, therefore, are ἁμαρτήματα.

<sup>2</sup> Thus ἁμαρτία is opposed to κακία: *Eth. Nic.* vii. 4. 1148 a 2, ἥ μὲν γὰρ ἄκρασία ψέγεται οὐχ ὡς ἁμαρτία μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ὡς κακία τις ἥ ἀπλῶς οὐσα ἥ κατὰ τι μέρος. But ἁμαρτία is sometimes used loosely as a euphemistic phrase for the vicious state of the ἄδικοι who act from ἡ καθόλου ἄγνοια or ἡ ἐν τῇ προαιρέσει ἄγνοια: *Eth. Nic.* iii. 1. 1110 b 29, διὰ τὴν τοιαύτην ἁμαρτίαν ἄδικοι καὶ ὅλως κακοὶ γίνονται.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 3, ὁ μῆτε ἀρετῇ διαφέρων καὶ δικαιοσύνη, μῆτε διὰ κακίαν καὶ μοχθηρίαν μεταβάλλων εἰς τὴν δυστυχίαν: xiii. 4, μὴ διὰ μοχθηρίαν ἀλλὰ δι' ἁμαρτίαν μεγάλην. It must be owned, however, that μεγάλη is not a natural adjective to apply to a mental quality or a flaw in conduct.

On the other hand, there are many indications in the *Poetics* that the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles is Aristotle's ideal play. Now Oedipus, though of a hasty and impulsive temperament, with something too of proud self-assertion, cannot, broadly speaking, be said to have owed his ruin to any striking moral defect. His character was not the determining factor in his fortunes. He, if any man, was in a genuine sense the victim of circumstances. In slaying Laius he was probably in some degree morally culpable. But the act was done certainly after provocation, and possibly in self-defence.<sup>1</sup> His life was a chain of errors, the most fatal of all being the marriage with his mother. All minor acts of ignorance culminated here; and yet it was a purely unconscious offence to which no kind of blame attached. If Oedipus is the person who suggested to Aristotle the formula of this chapter, we can hardly limit the word to its moral meaning, as marking either a defect of character or a single passionate or inconsiderate act. *ἀμαρτία* may well include the three meanings above mentioned, which in English cannot be covered by a single term.<sup>2</sup> The larger sense, if it may be assumed, will add to the

<sup>1</sup> *Oed. Col.* 992.

<sup>2</sup> For *ἀμαρτία*, *ἀμαρτάνω* in successive lines shifting from the sense of voluntary to involuntary wrong-doing cf. *Oed. Col.* 966 sqq.—

profound significance of Aristotle's remark. A single great error, whether morally culpable or not; a single great defect in a character otherwise noble,—each and all of these may carry with them the tragic issues of life and death.

In any case no sharp distinction can be drawn between moral and purely intellectual error, least of all by a philosopher who laid as much stress as Aristotle did on right knowledge as an element in conduct. A moral error easily shades off into a mere defect of judgment. But that mere defect may work as potently as crime. Good intentions do not make actions right. The lofty disinterestedness of Brutus cannot atone for his want of practical insight. In the scheme of the universe a wholly unconscious error violates the law of perfection; it disturbs the moral order of the world. Distinctions of motive—the moral guilt or purity of the agent—are not here in question. So too in tragedy those are doomed who innocently err no less than those who sin consciously. Nay, the tragic irony sometimes lies precisely herein, that owing to some inherent frailty or flaw—it may be human short-sightedness, it may be some error of blood or judgment—the very virtues of a man hurry him

*ἐπεὶ καθ' αὐτόν γ' οὐκ ἂν ἐξείποις ἐμοὶ  
ἁμαρτίας ὄνειδος οὐδέν, ἀνθ' ὅτου  
τάδ' εἰς ἐμαυτὸν τοὺς ἐμούς θ' ἡμάραντον.*

The first ἁμαρτία is a conscious sin which might have brought on him involuntary guilt as a divinely-sent expiation.!

forward to his ruin. Othello in the modern drama, Oedipus in the ancient—widely as they differ in moral guilt—are the two most conspicuous examples of ruin wrought by characters, noble indeed, but not without defects, acting in the dark, and, as it seemed, for the best.

We should probably be putting too great a pressure on the words of Aristotle and should go beyond his intention, if we sought to include under the rule of ch. xiii. such a character as Macbeth. Still the thought of our passage lends itself easily to this enlargement of the meaning. Macbeth does not start with criminal purpose. In its original quality his nature was not devoid of nobility. But with him the *ἀμαρτία*, the primal defect, is the taint of ambition, which under the promptings of a stronger character than his own and a more vivid imagination works in him as a subtle poison. In a case such as this, tragic fear is heightened into awe, as we trace the growth of a mastering passion, which beginning in a fault or frailty enlarges itself in its successive stages, till the first false step has issued in crime, and crime has engendered fresh crime. It is of the essence of a great tragedy to bring together the beginning and the end; to show the one implicit in the other. The intervening process disappears; the causal chain so unites the whole that the first *ἀμαρτία* bears the weight of the tragic result.



Aristotle's theory of the tragic character has suggested two divergent lines of criticism. On the one hand it is urged, that the rule δι' ἀμαρτίαν leaves no room for a 'true tragic collision.' The fate of the hero is determined by forces outside the control of the human will. A mere error, due to the inherent limitations of man's faculties, brings ruin. Thus, it is said, the highest form of tragedy in which character is destiny, is at once excluded. Nothing is left but the drama of an external fate.


This objection assumes that the tragic ἀμαρτία is in truth no more than an ἀτύχημα, a mere accident, a misadventure, the circumstances being such that reason and foresight are unavailing. Now, even if the word, as here used, were so limited, a collision of forces such as is essential to the drama would not be wanting. If a man is so placed that he is at war with the forces outside him—either the forces of the universe, the fixed conditions of existence, the inevitable laws of life, which constitute 'Fate'; or the forces that reside in other wills that cross and thwart his own—the result may be a tragic conflict. The ancient drama is chiefly, though by no means exclusively, the representation of a conflict thus unwittingly begun, however much purpose may be involved in its later stages. The spectacle of a man struggling with his fate affords ample scope for the display

of will-power and ethical qualities. The *Oedipus Tyrannus* portrays a tragic conflict none the less moving because the original error which leads to the catastrophe springs from the necessary blindness and infirmity of human nature.

But if we yield the main contention of these critics, and admit that a 'true tragic collision' is one in which character and passion determine destiny; in which the individual knowingly enters on a conflict where the forces enlisted on either side are chiefly moral forces, Aristotle's phrase, if we have rightly interpreted it, will still include the most interesting and significant of such cases. The great frailty will then be a moral frailty. The resulting collision will in general be one of two kinds. Either the individual from levity or passion violates a known right, encroaches on a sphere not his own, and provokes a conflict which reacts on his character and culminates in tragic disaster: or the collision will be one between internal moral forces, the scene of the conflict being the heart of man. Hence we get the struggles of conscience, the wavering purpose, the divided will,—dramatic motives rarely found in the older Greek tragedians, but which with Euripides entered into the domain of the drama, and thenceforth held an assured place. The objection, therefore, to this extent appears to be invalid. At the same time, as already indicated,

Aristotle's doctrine is in a measure defective. It fails to take account of two exceptional types of tragedy,—that which exhibits the antagonism between a pure will and a disjointed world, or between a grand but criminal purpose, and the higher moral forces with which it is confronted. ✓

Another class of critics have been reluctant under any circumstances to disallow the authority of Aristotle. It was gravely observed by Roger Bacon that 'Aristotle hath the same authority in philosophy that the Apostle Paul hath in divinity.' After the Renaissance the general intellectual sovereignty already wielded by Aristotle was extended, especially in France, to the whole field of literature. Every well-constructed tragedy, ancient or modern, was supposed to square with the rules of the *Poetics*. When the facts of literary history refused to adjust themselves to the text, the meaning of the text was strained or explained away, till the original rules were not unfrequently forced to bear the very sense they were designed to exclude. So far was the infallibility of Aristotle carried that on one occasion Dacier makes short work with an Italian commentator, who had ventured to find an inconsistency between a passage of the *Poetics* and the words of Holy Writ. He brushes the objection aside with a simple *reductio ad absurdum*. 'As if Divinity and the Holy Scriptures could ever be contrary to the sentiments



of Nature on which Aristotle founds his judgments.' <sup>1</sup> Methods of interpretation were applied to the *Poetics* with which we are more familiar in Biblical criticism. The words of Aristotle were explained and defended by just those expedients that have been resorted to in support of the verbal interpretation of Scripture.

Corneille was one of the adepts in the art of adding glosses and saving clauses to the Aristotelian text. Though he has left many luminous statements of the principles of poetry, his work as an expositor is too often inspired by the desire to reconcile Aristotelian rules with plays of his own, which had been written before he had become acquainted with the *Poetics*. A single instance—one of those quoted by Lessing—will show his easy method of harmonising difficulties. Character, we are told in the *Poetics* (ch. xv.), must be *χρηστά*, 'good':—the word can bear no other than the moral meaning. Corneille, seeing that this requirement, taken rigidly, would condemn a large number of admirable plays, surmises that what Aristotle demands is 'the brilliant or elevated character of a virtuous or criminal habit.' <sup>2</sup> He instances his own *Cleopatra*, a heroine who is 'extremely wicked'; 'there is no murder from which she shrinks.' 'But all her crimes are connected with a certain grandeur of

<sup>1</sup> Dacier on *Poetics*, ch. xiii. note 1, Trans.

<sup>2</sup> Corneille, Discours i. *Du Poème Dramatique*.

soul, which has in it something so elevated, that while we condemn her actions, we must still admire the source whence they flow.'

In itself this criticism is on the right track; but not as an explanation of the Aristotelian *χρηστὰ ἦθῃ*. It is what Aristotle ought to have said, not what he says. As Lessing observes,<sup>1</sup> Aristotle's 'goodness' must on this view be 'of a sort that agrees with moral badness as well as with moral goodness.' In a similar spirit of mistaken loyalty to Aristotle, and in similar defiance of linguistic usage, other commentators, — Bossu, Dacier, Metastasio — persuaded themselves that *χρηστὰ ἦθῃ* could mean 'well marked' characters, in this way rescuing the word from its objectionable moral limitations. Lessing here, while avoiding these errors of interpretation and retaining the plain meaning of the words, does so on grounds which are wholly un-Aristotelian. 'Corneille,' he says, 'could not have had a more pernicious idea' than that vice may be ennobled by aesthetic treatment. 'If we carry it out there is an end to all truth, and all delusion, to all moral benefit of tragedy. . . . What folly to desire to deter by the unhappy consequences of vice if we conceal its inner ugliness.' He is still under the influence of his great assumption, that the immediate business of tragedy is to make men better.

<sup>1</sup> Lessing, *Hamb. Dram. Trans.* (Bohn) p. 437.

There is another method by which the authority of Aristotle has been vindicated. Plays have been brought into harmony with his supposed rules at the cost of manifest violence done to the poems themselves. Shakespeare has not escaped this vice of interpretation. Gervinus, dominated, as it would seem, by the idea of a moral *ἀμαρτία*, is inclined to find some culpable error wherever there is tragic ruin. Such an error is proved to be the cause, or partial cause, of the misfortune that ensues not merely to the protagonist, but also to the subordinate dramatic characters. He discovers a 'poetic justice' in the death of Duncan, whose unwary security led him to accept the hospitality of Macbeth; in the death of Cordelia, whose want of 'wise and prudent foresight' places her in contrast with Edgar, and justifies the difference between her fate and his; in the death of Desdemona, who is guilty of 'dangerous intercession on behalf of Cassio,' and 'falls into sin through innocence and goodness.'

Setting aside these strange perversions of criticism, we may well believe that Aristotle would have felt some surprise at being assumed to have laid down a binding code of poetical rules for all time and place. The contrast is, indeed, a curious one between his own tentative manner and the dogmatic conclusions based on what he has written. He feels his way, he tacitly corrects or

supplements what he has previously said; with a careless ease he throws out suggestions, without guarding against misconception. He little thought of the far-reaching meaning that would one day be attached to each stray utterance. It is not merely the fragmentary form of the *Poetics* and the gaps and errors in the text that should warn us against straining the significance of isolated expressions. Aristotle's own manner is allusive and incomplete. He does not write with the fear of other critics before his eyes. He assumes an audience already familiar with the general drift of his thought, able to fill in what is unsaid and to place his rules in proper light and perspective.

In this very chapter he proposes at the outset to sketch the plan of the *ideal* tragedy.<sup>1</sup> It is of the type technically known in the *Poetics* as 'complex' (πεπλεγμένη), not simple (ἀπλή). The 'complex' tragedy is one in which the change of fortune (μετάβασις) is combined with Reversal or Recoil of the Action (περιπέτεια) or with Recognition (ἀναγνώρισις), or with both.<sup>2</sup> Much

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xiii. 2, τὴν σύνθεσιν . . . τῆς καλλίστης τραγῳδίας.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* x. 2. No precise English equivalent can be found for the word περιπέτεια in its full Aristotelian sense. The traditional translation 'Reversal of Fortune' is incorrect, as has been shown by Vahlen in his *Beiträge zu Aristoteles Poetik*, and by Rev. W. Lock in an interesting article in the *Classical Review*, vol. ix. pp. 251 ff. The περιπέτεια is distinct from the μετάβασις or change of fortune; it is merely one of the means by which the μετάβασις is brought about. According to its definition in *Poet.*

misconception might have been avoided had it been noted that Aristotle is here concerned not with what is *good* in tragic art, but what is *best*; he is describing the ideal tragedy, with the ideal hero to correspond. The way in which other types of plot and character are dismissed is, no doubt, too sweeping, too summary, and partakes of the

xi. 1, it is a change by which a line of action intended to produce a certain effect produces the opposite, —an overruling of the intention of one of the agents. The first instance given by Aristotle (xi. 1) is from the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 1002 sqq., where the intended means of proving the king's innocence becomes, by the irony of events, the most convincing proof of his guilt. As other illustrations of its meaning Mr. Lock adds the story of Shylock in the *Merchant of Venice*, of Adrastus in Herodotus, of Haman and Mordecai in the book of Esther, of Joseph and his brethren. He further observes that 'περιπέτεια is to actions what irony is to language. In the latter case, words are caught up by circumstances and charged with a fuller meaning than the speaker meant; in the former, deeds are equally caught up out of his grasp and charged with a meaning the very opposite of that which the agent meant.' Hence, we may note, περιπέτεια is often the nearest equivalent for what is known in modern criticism as the 'Irony of Destiny.'

Apart, however, from this special and technical meaning, Aristotle certainly uses the word in a simpler sense for the mere development or evolution of incident out of incident. Mr. Prickard has called my attention to a passage in *de Hist. Anim.* viii. 2. 590 b 13, where περιπέτεια is applied to the *turn of incident* by which the polypus eats the crab, the crab eats the conger, and the conger eats the polypus. In this looser sense I take the phrase ἐκ περιπετείας (*Poet.* xvi. 3), which is used of the recognition of Odysseus by his nurse (*Odys.* xix. 396 ff.), as opposed to an ἀναγνώρισις πίστewς ἔνεκα (i.e. with the deliberate intention to convince). Mr. Lock explains it slightly otherwise, as = 'accidentally.' He compares the usage of the word in Polybius for 'an accident,' or 'a disaster.'



same exaggeration as certain remarks in ch. vi. about the subordinate place of character in the drama.<sup>1</sup> It is, however, a feature of Aristotle's manner, especially in his more popular treatises, to set aside the less preferred of two alternatives in words which imply unqualified rejection. The ideal tragedy, as here sketched by him, is one which will excite pity and fear in no ordinary combination, but these two emotions heightened to their utmost capacity under the conditions of the most perfect art. We cannot infer that he would condemn as utterly bad all that did not come up to these requirements. There may be an inferior, but still an interesting tragedy, in which the union of the terrible and the pathetic does not answer to the full tragic idea. The play will fall short—so Aristotle would probably say—in a greater or less degree of perfection, but it does not cease to be tragedy. ✓

When due weight has been given to these considerations, the formula here proposed for the character of the tragic hero will still remain incomplete and inadequate. Yet—as is often the case with Aristotle's sayings—it contains a profound truth, and a capacity for adaptation beyond what was immediately present to the mind of the writer. He insists on the conditions above specified as requisite, if we would merge our own personality

<sup>1</sup> See p. 337.

in the creation of the poet. No 'faultily faultless' hero, any more than a consummate villain, can inspire so vital a sympathy as the hero whose weakness and whose strength alike bring him within the range of our common humanity.

- Modern literature, and above all the Shakespearian drama, while proving that the formula of Aristotle is too rigid, have also revealed new meanings in the idea of the tragic *ἀμαρτία*. Its dramatic possibilities have been enlarged and deepened. In Hamlet, Othello, Lear, Macbeth, Coriolanus, we have the ruin of noble natures through some defect of character. In infinitely various ways it has been shown that the most dramatic of motives is the process by which a frailty, or flaw of nature, grows and expands till it culminates in tragic disaster.

## CHAPTER IX .

### PLOT AND CHARACTER IN TRAGEDY

OF the six elements into which Aristotle analyses a tragedy,<sup>1</sup> plot (*μῦθος*) holds the first place. Next in order is placed *ēthos* (*ἦθος*), and then *dianoia* (*διάνοια*). Each of these terms needs some explanation.

Plot in the drama is the artistic equivalent of 'action' in real life.<sup>2</sup> We have already observed<sup>3</sup> that 'action' (*πρᾶξις*) in Aristotle is not a purely external act, but an inward process which works outward, the expression of a man's rational personality. Sometimes it is used for 'action' or 'doing' in its strict and limited sense; sometimes for that side of right conduct (*εὐπραξία*) in which doing is only an element, though the most important. Again, it can denote 'faring' as well as doing: hence, in the drama, where 'action' is represented by the plot, it must include outward fortune and

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* vi., ὄψις, μελοποιία, λέξις, μῦθος, ἦθος, διάνοια.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* vi. 6, ἔστιν δὲ τῆς μὲν πράξεως ὁ μῦθος.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 123.

misfortune (*εὐτυχία* and *δυστυχία*). Again, it is used by Aristotle of the processes of the mental life;<sup>1</sup> and lastly, in some contexts it is almost synonymous with *πάθη*.

The *πρᾶξις* of the drama has primary reference to that kind of action which, while springing from the inward power of will, manifests itself in external doing. The very word 'drama' indicates this idea. The verb (*δρᾶν*), from which the noun comes, is the strongest of the words used to express the notion of *doing*; it marks an activity exhibited in outward and energetic form.<sup>2</sup> In the drama the characters are not described, they enact their own story and so reveal themselves. We know them not from what we are told of them, but by what we see them do before our eyes. Without action in this sense, a poem would be not a bad drama, but no drama at all. The form might be epic or lyric, it would not be dramatic.

But this does not exhaust the idea of *πρᾶξις* as

<sup>1</sup> *Pol.* iv. (vii.) 3. 1325 b 16, ἀλλὰ τὸν πρακτικὸν (βίον) οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι πρὸς ἑτέροισι, καθάπερ οἴονται τινες, οὐδὲ τὰς διανοίας εἶναι μόνον ταύτας πρακτικὰς τὰς τῶν ἀποβαινόντων χάριν γινομένης ἐκ τοῦ πράττειν, ἀλλὰ πολὺ μᾶλλον τὰς αὐτοτελεῖς καὶ τὰς αὐτῶν ἕνεκεν θεωρίας καὶ διανοήσεις. ἡ γὰρ εὐπραξία τέλος, ὥστε καὶ πρᾶξις τις· μάλιστα δὲ πράττειν λέγομεν κυρίως καὶ τῶν ἑξωτερικῶν πράξεων τοὺς ταῖς διανοαῖς ἀρχιτέκτονας.

<sup>2</sup> *δρῶντων* καὶ οὐ δι' ἀπαγγελίας are the words of the definition of tragedy. Cf. the frequent antithesis of *δρᾶν* and *πάσχειν*, and the adj. *δραστήριος*.

understood by Aristotle. Among the reasons he gives for the preeminent place assigned to the plot, one is of fundamental importance. Tragedy, he explains, is an imitation of an action which is an image of human life,—of its supreme welfare or misery; that life itself consisting in a mode of action, not in a mere quality of mind<sup>1</sup>—in a form of moral energy or activity, which has a profoundly inward as well as an outward side. The plot or *πρᾶξις* of the drama reproduces this most significant mode of action; it does not stop short at strenuous doing. Still less is it a representation of purely outward fortune or misfortune. The words used by Aristotle are not *μίμησις εὐτυχίας καὶ δυστυχίας*, but *μίμησις πράξεως καὶ βίου*. The former phrase would be too external, too apparently superficial to sum up the essence and meaning of a tragedy as a whole, though it is through the outward turns of fortune that the catastrophe is brought about; these are the medium by which the inner sense of the action is revealed.

The plot, then, contains the kernel of that

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* vi. 9, ἡ γὰρ τραγωδία μίμησις ἐστὶν οὐκ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλὰ πράξεως καὶ βίου· <ὁ δὲ βίος> ἐν πράξει ἐστὶν καὶ τὸ τέλος πρᾶξις τις ἐστίν, οὐ ποιότης. (For the reading see *Crit. Notes*.)

With the last words cf. *Pol.* iv. (vii.) 3. 1325 b 21 (quoted note 1, p. 328): *Phys.* ii. 6. 197 b 2, διὸ καὶ ἀνάγκη περὶ τὰ πρακτὰ εἶναι τὴν τύχην· σημείον δ' ὅτι δοκεῖ ἦτοι ταῦτ' εἶναι τῇ εὐδαιμονίᾳ ἢ εὐτυχίᾳ ἢ ἐγγύς, ἢ δ' εὐδαιμονία πρᾶξις τις· εὐπραξία γάρ.

'action' which it is the business of tragedy to represent. The word 'action,' as is evident from what has been said, requires to be interpreted with much latitude of meaning. It embraces not only the deeds, the incidents, the situations, but also the mental processes, and the motives which underlie the outward events or which result from them. It is the compendious expression for all these forces working together towards a definite end.

Next we come to *ēthos* and *dianoia*. In their aesthetic application these present some difficulties. Aristotle appears, indeed, to bestow unusual pains on elucidating their meaning, for he gives at least two definitions or interpretations of each in ch. vi., which again are supplemented by the observations of ch. xv. regarding *ēthos*, and of ch. xix. regarding *dianoia*.<sup>1</sup> Yet a clear and consistent view

<sup>1</sup> Mr. R. P. Hardie (*Mind*, vol. iv. No. 15) observes that while the expression or imitation of the *πρᾶξις* is called the *μῦθος*, there are no special words for the *μίμησις* of *ἦθος* and of *διάνοια*, and hence both are ambiguously used, (1) as implied in the visible *πρᾶξις*, (2) as = *μίμησις τοῦ ἦθους* and *μίμησις τῆς διανοίας*, where a certain amount of *λόγος* is required to make clear to the audience what is going on in the minds of the agents, without which knowledge the *πρᾶξις* cannot be rightly understood.

The dramatic *ἦθος* is defined in the following passages:—

- (i) *Poet.* vi. 6, τὰ δὲ ἦθη (λέγω), καθ' ὃ ποιούς τινὰς εἶναί φημεν τοὺς πράττοντας: cf. vi. 10, εἰσὶν δὲ κατὰ μὲν τὰ ἦθη ποιοῖ τινες. These passages are both somewhat inconsistent with vi. 5, where the character of persons (*ποιοῖ τινες*) is said to be determined not by *ἦθος* alone, but by *ἦθος* and *διάνοια*.
- (ii) *Poet.* vi. 17 (where *ἦθος* is in the second sense above

cannot be extracted from ch. vi. in the form in which we have it; and this fact, taken in conjunction with the multiplicity of definitions, has afforded some ground for suspecting that there

mentioned, = *μίμησις τοῦ ἥθους*), *ἔστιν δὲ ἥθος μὲν τὸ τοιοῦτον ὃ δηλοῖ τὴν προαίρεσιν, ὅποιά τις [προ]αιρείται ἢ φεύγει· διόπερ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἥθος τῶν λόγων ἐν οἷς οὐκ ἔστι δηλὸν ἢ ἐν οἷς μὴδ' ὅλως ἔστιν ὃ τι [προ]αιρείται ἢ φεύγει ὃ λέγων.* (For the reading see *Crit. Notes*.) In this context the reference is to the dramatic *λόγοι* which express (a) *ἥθος*, (b) *διάνοιαν*. Cf. the rule for rhetorical *λόγοι* in *Rhet.* iii. 16. 1417 a 15, *ἡθικὴν δὲ χρὴ τὴν διήγησιν εἶναι. ἔσται δὲ τοῦτο, ἂν εἰδῶμεν τί ἥθος ποιῇ. ἐν μὲν δὴ τὸ προαίρεσιν δηλοῦν, ποιδὼν δὲ τὸ ἥθος τῷ ποιδῶν ταύτην· ἢ δὲ προαίρεσις ποιδῶ τῷ τέλει.*

- (iii) *Poet.* xv. 1, where *ἥθος* is expressed by any *λόγος* or *πράξις* that manifests moral purpose: *ἔξει δὲ ἥθος μὲν εἰάν ὥσπερ ἐλέχθη ποιῇ φανερόν ὃ λόγος ἢ ἡ πρᾶξις προαίρεσιν τινα [ῆ], χρηστὸν δὲ εἰάν χρηστήν.*

(On the different uses of *ἥθος* in the *Rhetoric* see Cope's Introduction pp. 108 ff.)

The dramatic *διάνοια* is thus explained:—

- (i) *Poet.* vi. 8, *διάνοιαν δέ, ἐν ὅσοις λέγοντες ἀποδεικνύασιν τι ἢ καὶ ἀποφαίνονται γνώμην.* A *γνώμη* is a general maxim, and *ἀποφαίνεσθαι*, 'enunciate,' a *verb. prop.* in connexion with it: so *καθόλου τι ἀποφαίνονται* in § 17. A *γνώμη*, though usually a *moral* maxim, exhibits *διάνοια* rather than *ἥθος*, probably because it is thought of as the starting-point or conclusion of an argument. See the use of *γνώμαι* in *Rhet.* ii. 21. 1395 b 14 as rhetorical enthymemes. There, however, they are said to give an *ethical* character to speeches.

- (ii) *Poet.* vi. 15, *τρίτον δὲ ἡ διάνοια. τοῦτο δὲ ἔστιν τὸ λέγειν δύνασθαι τὰ ἐνόντα καὶ τὰ ἀρμόττοντα.*

*Poet.* vi. 17, *διάνοια δέ, ἐν οἷς ἀποδεικνύουσιν τι ὡς ἔστιν ἢ ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν ἢ καθόλου τι ἀποφαίνονται.* Here,

may be both omissions and interpolations in the text. In what follows we will confine ourselves to certain broad conclusions, though even these may not all pass unchallenged.

The term *ēthos* is generally translated 'character,' and in many contexts this is its natural English equivalent. But if we would speak of character in its widest sense, as including all that reveals

as in vi. 8, *διάνοια* = *μίμησις τῆς διανοίας*, the subject to *ἀποδεικνύουσι* being the dramatic characters.

- (iii) xix. 1-2, *ἔστι δὲ κατὰ τὴν διάνοιαν ταῦτα, ὅσα ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου δεῖ παρασκευασθῆναι. μέρη δὲ τούτων τό τε ἀποδεικνύουσι καὶ τὸ λύειν καὶ τὸ πάθη παρασκευάζειν, οἷον ἔλεον ἢ φόβον ἢ ὀργὴν καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα, καὶ ἔτι μέγεθος καὶ μικρότητας.* Here the *διάνοια* that is manifested in dramatic *λόγοι* is brought within the domain of Rhetoric (*τὰ μὲν οὖν περὶ τὴν διάνοιαν ἐν τοῖς περὶ ῥητορικῆς κείσθω*).

Mr. R. P. Hardie (l.c.) takes *τὸ πάθη παρασκευάζειν* in the sense of 'to supply (to the spectators) *πάθη*,' i.e. the *πάθη* of οἱ λέγοντες, not, as in the ordinary view, to excite the feelings of the audience. The words, he thinks, might well mean to 'convey an impression,' but could hardly be used with precision to express 'the excitation of the feelings.' 'This interpretation,' he adds, 'seems to be confirmed by the phrase in the immediate context, *ὅσα ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου δεῖ παρασκευασθῆναι*. It is confirmed also, perhaps, by the mention not only of *ἔλεος* and *φόβος* but also of *ὀργή* καὶ *ὅσα τοιαῦτα* as the *πάθη* to be expressed or excited, for *ἔλεος* and *φόβος* are the only feelings of the spectators that Aristotle consistently contemplates; but possibly the reference to rhetoric . . . would suggest the inclusion of other *πάθη* besides these two.'

While admitting the excellent sense thus afforded, I greatly doubt whether *τὸ πάθη παρασκευάζειν* could bear the highly condensed meaning here assigned to it.



a man's personal and inner self—his intellectual powers no less than the will and the emotions—we go beyond the meaning of the Aristotelian *ēthos*. In the *Poetics*, *ēthos* and *dianoia* are each one side of character; they are two distinct factors which unite to constitute the concrete and living person. Character in its most comprehensive sense depends on these two elements, which, again, are declared to be the causes of action, and to determine its quality.<sup>1</sup> *Ethos*, as explained by Aristotle, is the moral element in character. It reveals a certain state or direction of the will. It is an expression of moral purpose, of the permanent disposition and tendencies, the tone and sentiment of the individual. *Dianoia* is the thought, the intellectual element, which is implied in all rational conduct, through which alone *ēthos* can find outward expression, and which is separable from *ēthos* only by a process of abstraction.

*Ethos*  
*Dianoia*

When we pass to the dramatic *ēthos* and *dianoia*, we find that *ēthos* reveals itself both in the speeches and actions of the dramatic characters in a manner corresponding to the twofold manifestation of *ēthos*

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* vi. 5, πράττεται δὲ ὑπὸ τινῶν πραττόντων, οὓς ἀνάγκη ποιοῖς τινὰς εἶναι κατὰ τε τὸ ἦθος καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν (διὰ γὰρ τούτων καὶ τὰς πράξεις εἶναι φάμεν ποιὰς τινὰς, πέφυκεν δὲ αἰτίας δύο τῶν πράξεων εἶναι, διάνοιαν καὶ ἦθος. . .). Cf. *Eth. Nic.* vi. 2. 1139 a 34, εὐπραγία γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἐναντίον ἐν πράξει ἀνευ διανοίας καὶ ἠθους οὐκ ἔστιν. But in *Poet.* vi. 6 and 10 it is more loosely said that we are ποιοί τινες κατὰ τὰ ἦθη.

in real life.<sup>1</sup> But we observe with surprise that *ēthos* as revealed in action is but lightly touched on. Still more surprising is it that though *dianoia* in real life is stated to be one of the two causes of action, there is no express recognition of it as similarly manifested in the drama.<sup>2</sup> The reason of

<sup>1</sup> Note 1, p. 330. Mr. Bosanquet in his acute observations on plot and character-drawing (*History of Aesthetic*, pp. 70 sqq.) argues against *ἦθος* being taken to mean 'character in the sense in which character is understood to-day, to be the object of artistic portraiture in Shakespeare or Thackeray.' The remarks in the text bear out this contention, though from another point of view. It is more difficult to agree entirely with his view that *ἦθος* in the *Poetics* is something merely 'typical and generic,' 'as we say good or bad character,' a certain type of disposition or moral temperament without the more individual traits. We may indeed readily admit that the subtlety and delicacy of modern character-drawing did not present themselves to Aristotle's mind: more simple and elementary qualities formed the basis of dramatic character as he understood it. But it appears pretty certain that he thought of *individual* portraiture, and not merely of the delineation of a moral type. This seems to follow if only from the rules about τὰ ἦθη in ch. iv., especially from the requirement that the law of necessity or probability, prescribed for the plot, shall apply also to the speeches and actions of the dramatic persons (§§ 5-6). This inner rationality surely demands a strong basis of individual character.

Mr. R. P. Hardie (l.c.) similarly observes in reference to ch. xiii. where *ἦθος* is discussed in reference to *μῦθος*, that 'the drift of the whole passage implies that *ἦθος* does not necessarily mean to Aristotle a simple generic type, but that its complexity is precisely on a level with the complexity of the plot.'

<sup>2</sup> It is true that in *Poet.* xix. 3 *διάνοια* is exhibited in the plot as well as in the dramatic λόγοι. But the *διάνοια* thus revealed is the mind of the poet, not of the dramatic characters. It is the thought, the idea, that underlies the incidents. Certain effects have to be produced, certain emotions awakened. The plot

the omission may possibly be that action is treated in the *Poetics* as a separate and independent element of tragedy, and kept distinct as far as possible from the other elements. This is, indeed, one of the inconveniencies arising from the highly analytic method of Aristotle in dealing with the organic parts of an artistic whole, as also with the phenomena of life. *Amen* It is a method that tends to divert our attention from the interlacing union of the parts and from their final synthesis. Be the cause what it may, explicit mention is made in our text of the dramatic *dianoia* as embodied only in speech, not in action.

In the dramatic dialogue, the persons who converse do not discuss abstract truth such as the problems of mathematics;<sup>1</sup> they desire to explain their own doings, and to influence others. The two elements, *ēthos* and *dianoia*, may indeed be found side by side in one and the same discourse; but even so, there is an appreciable difference between must be so shaped as to carry its message and meaning without the aid of verbal exposition. The pity and fear the poet desires to excite are conveyed by the inner structure of the story, and more eloquently than by any speeches: the course of the action bears the impress of the poet's thought (cf. xiv. 1, τοῦτο ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν ἐμποιητέον). The events have, as we might say, a 'logic' of their own, a meaning, a purpose, which gives to the play its central unity.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Poet.* vi. 17, διόπερ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἥθος τῶν λόγων ἐν οἷς οὐκ ἔστι δῆλον ἢ ἐν οἷς μὴδ' ὅλως ἔστιν ὃ τι [προ]αίρεται ἢ φεύγει ὁ λέγων, with *Rhet.* iii. 16. 1417 a 18, διὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ἔχουσιν οἱ μαθηματικοὶ λόγοι ἥθη ὅτι οὐδὲ προαίρεσιν.

*dianoia*  
debate

them. Wherever moral choice, or a determination of the will is manifested, there *ēthos* appears.<sup>1</sup> Under *dianoia* are included the intellectual reflections of the speaker; the proof of his own statements, the disproof of those of his opponents, his general maxims concerning life and conduct, as elicited by the action, and forming part of a train of reasoning. The emphasis laid by Aristotle on this dialectical *dianoia* is doubtless connected with the decisive influence exercised by political debate and forensic pleading on the Greek theatre, the *ἀγών* of the ecclesia or of the law courts being reproduced in the *ἀγών* of the drama.

The eager insistence with which Aristotle maintains the subordination of *ēthos* to plot<sup>2</sup> leads him into a certain exaggeration of statement. The two elements are set against one another in sharp and impossible antithesis. 'Without action there cannot be a tragedy; there may be without *ēthē*.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Inferior writers attempted, it would seem, to make ethical monologues take the place of a well constructed plot. *Poet.* vi. 12, *ἔτι ἂν τις ἐφεξῆς θῇ ῥήσεις ἠθικὰς καὶ λέξει καὶ διανοίᾳ εὖ πεποιημένας, οὐ ποιήσει ὁ ἦν τῆς τραγῳδίας ἔργον.* Cf. Plato *Phædr.* 268 C—269 A, where such *ῥήσεις* are reckoned among *τὰ πρὸ τραγῳδίας*, 'the preliminaries of tragedy,' not as *τὰ τραγικά*.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* vi. 10, *οὐκ οὖν ὅπως τὰ ἡθῆ μιμήσονται πράττουσιν, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἡθῆ συμπαράλαμβάνουσιν διὰ τὰς πράξεις: vi. 15, ἔστιν τε (ὁ μῦθος) μίμησις πράξεως καὶ διὰ ταύτην μάλιστα τῶν πραττόντων.*

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* vi. 11, *ἔτι ἄνευ μὲν πράξεως οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο τραγῳδία, ἄνευ δὲ ἡθῶν γένοιτ' ἄν.* There is some degree of exaggeration also in the following sentence, *αἱ γὰρ τῶν νέων τῶν πλείστων*

This clearly cannot be pressed in a perfectly literal sense. Moral action apart from ethical qualities in the agent is a meaningless abstraction, as also are ethical qualities without action. In life they must exist together, being two sides of one concrete reality. What is probably intended to be conveyed is, that there may be a tragedy without the individual portraiture of moral character. The persons may be mere types or marked only by class characteristics, lacking in those distinctive qualities out of which dramatic action grows.<sup>1</sup> There cannot, on the other hand, be a tragedy without some kind of connected scheme of incident and situation—in a word, without a more or less unified ‘action.’ The illustration from painting in ch. vi. 15, which has been subjected to some

*ἀήθεις τραγῳδίαι εἰσίν*, and again in *ἡ δὲ Ζεύξιδος γραφή οὐδὲν ἔχει ἡθός*.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bosanquet (*History of Aesthetic*, p. 73) explains Aristotle's meaning a little differently. ‘He may not have been contrasting the plot, as a mere puzzle and solution, with the portrayal of individual human character, but he may rather have intended to oppose the man as revealed in action, or in speech which contributes to the march of incident, with monologue or conversation simply intended to emphasise this or that type of disposition in the interlocutors’ (cf. *supra* p. 336, note 1). So Mr. R. P. Hardie (l.c.), ‘*ἀήθεις τραγῳδίαι* cannot mean tragedies that have no *ἡθός* in any sense of the word, for the *πρᾶξις* represented must imply *ἡθός* of a determinate kind, but must mean rather tragedies that contain few or no *λόγοι* expressive of *ἡθός*. Such tragedies would naturally be contrasted with tragedies that have no *πρᾶξις* and consist wholly of *ρήσεις ἡθικαί*, i.e. *λόγοι* expressive of *ἡθός* as it is in itself apart from *πρᾶξις*.’

strained interpretations, throws further light on the reason why *ēthos* holds a position subsidiary to the plot or action. 'The most beautiful colours laid on confusedly will not give as much pleasure as the chalk outline of a portrait.'<sup>1</sup> Here the outlined sketch corresponds to the outline of plot. *Ethos* divorced from plot is like a daub of beautiful colour, which apart from form gives little pleasure. The plot is the groundwork, the design, through the medium of which *ēthos* derives its meaning and dramatic value.

The whole gist of the argument is finally summed up thus: 'The plot is the first principle and as it were the soul of the tragedy.'<sup>2</sup> The analogy here indicated goes deeper than might at once be apparent from the English words. The precise point of the comparison depends on the relation in which the soul stands to the body in the Aristotelian philosophy.<sup>3</sup> A play is a kind of living organism. Its animating principle is the plot. As in the animal and vegetable world the soul or principle of life is the primary and moving force, the *ἀρχή* from which the development of the organism proceeds, so it is

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* vi. 15, εἰ γὰρ τις ἐναλείψει τοῖς καλλίστοις φαρμάκοις χύδην, οὐκ ἂν ὁμοίως εὐφράνειεν καὶ λευκογραφήσας εἰκόνα.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* vi. 14, ἀρχὴ μὲν οὖν καὶ οἷον ψυχὴ ὁ μῦθος τῆς τραγωδίας.

<sup>3</sup> See *de Anim.* ii. 4. 415 b 7-21, where the soul is explained to be the efficient cause, the formal cause, and the final cause of the body.

with the plot in tragedy.<sup>1</sup> Round this nucleus the parts grow and group themselves. It is the origin of movement, the starting-point and basis of the play. Without it the play could not exist. It is the plot, again, which gives to the play its inner meaning and reality, as the soul does to the body. To the plot we look in order to learn what the play means; here lies its essence, its true significance. Lastly, the plot is 'the end of the tragedy'<sup>2</sup> as well as the beginning. Through the plot the intention of the play is realised. The distinctive emotional effect which the incidents are designed to produce, is inherent in the artistic structure of the whole. Above all, it is the plot that contains those Reversals of the Action (*περιπέτειαι*)<sup>3</sup> and other decisive moments, which most powerfully awake tragic feeling and excite the pleasure appropriate to tragedy.

Aristotle's doctrine of the primary importance of

<sup>1</sup> The constant use of *συνιστάναι* in the biological treatises of Aristotle should be compared with its meaning in the *Poetics* as applied to the formation and organic structure of a tragedy. *De Gen. Anim.* ii. 1. 733 b 20, ἥς (γονῆς) εἰσελθούσης τὰ ζῷα συνίσταται καὶ λαμβάνει τὴν οἰκείαν μορφήν. ii. 4. 739 b 33, ὅταν δὲ συστή τὸ κύημα ἤδη. . . . iii. 2. 753 b 3, γίγνεται τροφή τοῖς συνισταμένοις ζῷοις. So σύστασις: *de Gen. Anim.* ii. 6. 744 b 28, ἣ μὲν οὖν τῶν ὀστέων φύσις ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ συστάσει γίγνεται τῶν μορίων: cf. *de Part. Anim.* ii. 1. 646 a 20 sqq. *De Caelo* ii. 6. 288 b 16, ὅλη γὰρ ἰσως σύστασις τῶν ζῶων ἐκ τοιούτων συνέστηκεν ἃ διαφέρει τοῖς οἰκείοις τόποις.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* vi. 10, ὁ μῦθος τέλος τῆς τραγωδίας.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 323.

action or plot has been disputed by many modern critics. Plot, it is argued, is a mere external framework designed to illustrate the working of character. Character is in thought prior to action and is implied in it. Events have no meaning, no interest, except so far as they are supposed to proceed from will. Action is defined, expressed, interpreted by character. The question, however, which this chapter of the *Poetics* raises is not whether one element can in logical analysis be shown ultimately to contain the other; we have rather to ask which of the two is the more fundamental as regards the artistic conception and dramatic structure of a play. We will therefore inquire shortly what in its simplest analysis is meant by the drama,—what it is that constitutes dramatic action. We shall thus be able roughly  
x . to determine the relation in which the two factors, action and character, stand to one another.

Action, as has been shown, is the first artistic necessity of a play, the controlling condition of its existence. But mere action is not enough; an isolated deed, however terrible, however pathetic, has not in it the dramatic quality. Action, to be dramatic, must be exhibited in its development and in its results; it must stand in reciprocal and causal relation to certain mental states. We desire to see the feelings out of which it grows, the motive force of will which carries it to its conclusion; and, again, to trace the effect of the deed accomplished upon



the mind of the doer,—the emotions there generated as they become in turn new factors of action, and as they react thereby on the other dramatic characters. The drama, therefore, is will or emotion in action.

Further, the dramatic action forms a complete whole: it is a coherent series of events, standing in organic relation to one another, and bound together by the law of cause and effect. The internal centre, the pivot round which the whole system turns, is the plot. The characters are dramatic only so far as they are grouped round this centre, and work in with the movement of events towards an appointed end. Free and self-determined though they are, they exercise their freedom within a sphere which is prescribed by this primary condition of dramatic art. They reveal their personality not in all its fulness, but to such an extent as the natural course of the action may require. The situation and the circumstances in which they are placed, the other wills with which they come into collision, are precisely those which are best fitted to search out their weak places, to elicit their energy, and exhibit it in action.

But the drama not only implies emotion expressing itself in a complete and significant action and tending towards a certain end; it also implies a conflict. We may even modify Aristotle's phrase and say, that the dramatic conflict, not the mere plot, is 'the soul of the tragedy.' In every drama

there is a collision of forces. Man is imprisoned within the limits of the actual. Outside him is a necessity which restricts his freedom, a superior power with which his will frequently collides. Again, there is the inward discord of his own divided will; and, further, the struggle with other human wills which obstruct his own. The delineation of character is determined by the fact that a dramatic conflict of some kind has to be represented, and by the relation in which the several antagonistic forces stand to the plot as a whole. But while conflict is the soul of the drama, every conflict is not dramatic. In real life, as Aristotle points out,<sup>1</sup> all action does not manifest itself in external acts; there is a silent activity of speculative thought, which in the highest sense may be called action, though it never utters itself in deed. But the action of the drama cannot consist in an inward activity that does not pass beyond the region of thought or of emotion. Even where the main interest is centred in the internal conflict, this conflict must have its outward as well as its inward side: it must manifest itself in individual acts, in concrete relations with the world outside; it must bring the agent into collision with other personalities. We therefore exclude from the province of the drama purely mental conflicts—action and reaction within the mind itself—such as are the solitary struggles of the ascetic, the artist, the thinker. These are

<sup>1</sup> *Pol.* iv. (vii.) 3. 1325 b 16–23 (quoted note 1, p. 328).

dramatic only when they are brought into a plot, which gives them significance, and by which they become links in a chain of great events.

Only certain kinds of character, therefore, are capable of dramatic treatment. Character on its passive side, character expressing itself in passionate emotion and nothing more, is fit for lyrical poetry, but not for the drama. As action is the first necessity of the drama, so dramatic character has in it some vital and spontaneous force which can make and mould circumstances, which sets obstacles aside. It is of the battling, energetic type. The emotions must harden into will and the will express itself in deed. Much more rarely, as in Hamlet, can character become dramatic by an intellectual and masterly inactivity which offers resistance to the motives that prompt ordinary men to action. Events are then brought about, not by the free energy of will, but by acts, as it were, of arrested volition, by forces such as operate in the world of dreamland. There is in Hamlet a strenuous inaction, a *not-acting*, which is in itself a form of action. Characters such as this are not purely passive, they have an originating and resisting force of their own. Most, however, of Shakespeare's characters, like the heroes of the Greek drama, are strong and dominant natures, they are of a militant quality of mind. They put their whole selves, their whole force of thinking and of willing, into

what they do. Nothing is more wonderful than the resistless impulse, the magnificent energy of will, with which a Macbeth or a Richard III. goes to meet his doom.

Plot, then, is not, as is sometimes said, a mere external, an accident of the inner life. In the action of the drama character is defined and revealed. The conception of the plot as a whole must be present to the poet's mind prior to the execution of the parts; the characters will grow and shape themselves in conformity with the main action. In maintaining, however, that plot is the first essential of the drama, it is not implied that the plot must be complicated, that a difficult skein is tangled in order to excite curiosity, and unravelled again to relieve the feelings so excited. Neither in Aeschylus nor in Sophocles has plot for its own sake become a motive. Not even in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, where the threads are more elaborately tangled and the texture of the plot is woven closer than in any other Greek tragedy, is dramatic complication an end in itself. The normal Greek tragedy is singularly simple in structure. We do not find, as in *King Lear*, and elsewhere in the Shakespearian drama, two concurrent actions which are skilfully interwoven in order to lead up to a tragic end. Some of the greatest Greek plays are not only devoid of intricate plot, but present an unchanging situation.

In the *Prometheus* there is no outward movement, the main situation is at the end what it was at the beginning: the mental attitude of the hero is fixed and immovable, while a series of interlocutors come and go. We see before us the conflict of two superhuman wills, neither of which can yield to the other. Yet the dialogue is not mere conversation. Each speech of Prometheus is a step in the action; each word he utters is equivalent to a deed; it is the authentic voice of will which rises superior to physical bondage. The play is action throughout,—action none the less real because it consists not in doing, but in suffering. The reproach of want of movement which has been brought against the *Prometheus* has been also urged against Milton's *Samson Agonistes*. It is a drama, says Dr. Johnson, 'in which the intermediate parts have neither cause nor consequence, neither hasten nor retard the catastrophe.' Here again, however, a somewhat similar criticism is applicable. The speeches of Samson form an integral part of the action. The will-power which utters itself in dialogue is translated into deed, and culminates in a tragic catastrophe, as soon as the outward constraints are removed.

We may admit, then, with Aristotle that plot or action is the primary element in the artistic structure of the drama. But the case also presents another side, which is lightly touched

him, and which deserves to be made more prominent.

Briefly stated it is this. The action which springs out of character, and reflects character, alone satisfies the higher dramatic conditions.

Here there is a marked difference between epic and dramatic poetry. The epic poem relates a great and complete action, which attaches itself to the fortunes of a people, or to the destiny of mankind, and which sums up the life of a period. The story and the deeds of those who pass across its wide canvas are linked with the larger movement of which the men themselves are but a part. The particular action rests upon forces outside itself. The hero is swept into the tide of events. The hairbreadth escapes, the surprises, the episodes, the marvellous incidents of epic story, only partly depend on the spontaneous energy of the hero.

The tragic drama, on the other hand, represents the destiny of the individual man. Action and character are here more closely intertwined. Even if the connexion cannot be traced in every detail, it is generally manifest when we look to the whole tenor of the play. The action is the product of the characters and of the circumstances in which they are placed. It is but seldom that outward circumstances are entirely dominant over the forces of the spirit. If it is true that 'things outward do draw the inward quality after them,' it is no less true in tragedy that things inward draw the

outward after them. The outer and the inner world are here in nearer correspondence and equivalence than in any other form of poetry. The element of chance is all but eliminated. An inner bond of probability or necessity binds events together. This inevitable sequence of cause and effect is the link that character forges as it expresses itself in action. A man's deeds become external to him; his character dogs and pursues him as a thing apart. The fate that overtakes the hero is no alien thing, but his own self recoiling upon him for good or evil. 'Man's character,' as Heraclitus said, 'is his destiny' (*ἡθος ἀνθρώπου δαίμων*). To this vital relation between action and character is due the artistically compacted plot, the central unity of a tragedy. If, as Aristotle says, tragedy is a picture of life, it is of life rounded off, more complete, more significant, than any ordinary human life; revealing in itself the eternal law of things, summing up as in a typical example the story of human vicissitudes.

The dissent from Aristotle's doctrine that plot is the primary element in tragedy, is sometimes expressed in a modified form. Plot, it is admitted, was the primary element in the ancient drama; but, it is urged, the ancient drama was a drama of destiny; it obliterated character, while in the modern drama action is subordinate to character. Such is the view that De Quincey main-

Man, he says, being the 'puppet of fate could not with any effect display what we call a character'; for the will which is 'the central pivot of character was obliterated, thwarted, cancelled by the dark fatalism which brooded over the Grecian stage.' 'Powerful and elaborate character . . . would have been wasted, nay would have been defeated and interrupted by the blind agencies of fate.' Hence, as he argues, the Greek drama presents grand situations but no complex motives; statue-like groups of tragic figures, but little play of human passion; 'no struggle internal or external.'

It is strange that the Greeks of all people, and Aeschylus of all poets, should have been accused of depriving man of free agency and making him the victim of a blind fate. The central lesson of the Aeschylean drama is that man is the master of his own destiny: nowhere is his spiritual freedom more vigorously asserted.<sup>1</sup> The retribution which overtakes him is not inflicted at the hands of cruel or jealous powers. It is the justice of the gods, who punish him for rebellion against their laws. In ancient tragedy, the supernatural forces that order man's outward fortunes are, it is true, more visible than in the modern drama, but character is not obliterated, nor free personality effaced. The tragic action is no mere series of external incidents; it is a struggle

<sup>1</sup> See *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, pp. 108 ff. ed. 2.



of moral forces, the resultant of contending wills, — though a supreme necessity may guide the movement of events to unexpected issues. Plot does not overpower character; it is the very medium through which character is discerned, the touchstone by which its powers are tested.

Yet there is a certain sense in which we may say that the modern drama lays increased stress on the delineation of individual character. On the Greek stage the development of character was impeded by the unpliant material with which the tragedian had to work. By consecrated usage he was confined to a circle of legends whose main outlines were already fixed. These had come down from a remote past and bore traces of the rude times which had given them birth. The heroic legends of Greece were woven into the texture of national life: they appealed to the people by many associations,—by local worships and familiar representations of art. Epic story, however, had in it elements which the purer and more reflective morality of the Periclean age was constrained to reject. The traditional legends had to be adapted, as best they might, to the new ethical ideals.

In carrying out this task the poets were limited by the possibilities of the plot. The great facts of the legends could not be set aside. The audience, familiar with their own heroic history, were not

prepared for bold surprises. So far as the delineation of character itself was concerned, the utmost freedom of invention was allowed; the same dramatist might in successive tragedies exhibit a single person under various and inconsistent types of character. The point at which ethical portraiture was hampered was when the dramatic persons had to be fitted harmoniously into the framework of a particular plot. The details of the story might vary within wide limits, but the *end* was a thing given; and in the drama the end cannot but dominate the structure of the whole,—incidents and character alike. The weakness of the *Dénouement*, as compared with the complication, of many Greek tragedies is the direct result of the controlling tradition of the plot.

Though the poets handled the myths freely, often transforming the inner spirit and meaning of the tale, yet they could not quite overcome the inherent difficulties presented by the problem. Aeschylus and Sophocles succeeded in deepening and humanising the archaic stories, and in liberating the characters from the influence of the past. But in Euripides the strain has become too great. The tissue of the material yields; the old and the new world start asunder, the actions done belonging to the old order of things, the characters portrayed being the children of the poet's own generation.

The freedom of the Greek poet in delineating character was thus restricted by the choice of subject matter. Add to this another consideration. The themes usually handled were simple in outline, the main issues were clear and free from the disturbing accidents of individuality. In the legends selected the working of the eternal laws which govern human life could be visibly discerned. The dramatic characters were of corresponding simplicity. Their personality was seized by the immediate intuition of the poet at some decisive moment of action. A small portion was carved out of their career, illustrating human life in one of its typical aspects. Aeschylus, at once poet and prophet, sets forth in dramatic form the conflict between opposing principles,—between the implacable vengeance of an early age and the mercy which tempers justice, as in the *Eumenides*: or again, as in the *Prometheus*, he takes us back to a far-off past, and depicts the strife between two antagonists, each of them divine, who are representative of different dispensations, and hints at a future harmony, when divine Might should no longer be divorced from Wisdom and Beneficence. Sophocles, too, brings rival principles into collision. In the *Antigone* the divine and the human law stand opposed, and the religious duty towards the family triumphs over the claims of civic obedience. In the *Philoctetes*, the instincts of natural truthfulness

finally carry the day against diplomatic falsehood for the public good.

x Greek Tragedy, in its most characteristic examples, dramatises not the mere story of human calamities, but the play of great principles, the struggle between contending moral forces. The heroes are themselves the concrete embodiment of these forces. Religion, the State, the Family,—these were to a Greek the higher and enduring realities, the ideal ends for which he lived. Hence in the Greek drama, patriotism, wifely or sisterly devotion, all those elementary emotions which cluster round home and country, are the motives which chiefly impel to action and call forth the ardour of self-sacrifice. Seldom, at least in the older tragedians, do passions purely personal animate these tragic heroes: they are free from inward discord and self-contradiction: the ends they pursue are objective and rest on a belief in the abiding reality of the social organism.

.. The characters hereby gain universal meaning and validity: they are not of their own age and country only, but can claim kinship with mankind.

The modern drama introduces us into another world of poetic emotion. A richer and more varied inner life is opened up. The sense of personality is deepened. Even the idiosyncrasies of human nature become material to the dramatist. In Shakespeare .. character assumes inexhaustible variety. Its aspects

are for ever changing, discordant elements meet and are blended. The contradictions do not easily yield to psychological analysis; we seek to explain them, but we find ourselves dealing only with abstractions. Not until the persons enact their story before us, and are seen in the plenitude of organic life, do we feel that they are possible and real creations. The discovery of unsuspected depths in human nature has brought into prominence the subjective side of ethical portraiture, and subjective modes of viewing life. Love, honour, ambition, jealousy are the prevailing motives of modern tragedy; and of these love, the most exclusive of all the passions, dominates all other motives.

Shakespeare in deepening the subjective personality of man does not, however, lose sight of the objective ends of life and of the corresponding phases of character. Between these two sides of human experience he maintains a just balance. The particular emotions he stamps, as did the Greeks, with the impress of the universal. Nor does he permit the dramatised action to become subservient to the portrayal of individual character. Other poets, who have explored, though less profoundly, the recesses of human nature, and reproduced the rarer and more abnormal states of feeling, have been unable to rise above the pathological study of man,—a study as dangerous as it is fascinating to the dramatist. Indeed the conscious analysis of char-

acter and motive, even where the study of morbid conditions is not added, has marred the dramatic effect of many modern productions. Goethe with all his poetic genius did not surmount this danger. His reflective, emotional characters, who view life through the medium of individual feeling, seldom have the energy of will requisite to carry out a tragic action. They are described by the mouth of others, they express themselves in lyrical utterances of incomparable beauty. But the result is that where Shakespeare would have given us historical dramas, Goethe gives only dramatic biographies.

And, in general, the modern introspective habit, the psychological interest felt in character, has produced many dramatic lyrics, but few dramas.

The increased emphasis attaching to individual portraiture is seen again in the tendency of the romantic drama to exhibit character in growth,—in each successive stage of its evolution. A Greek tragedy takes a few significant scenes out of the hero's life; these are bound together by a causal chain and constitute a single and impressive action. Much that the moderns would include in the play itself is placed outside the drama, and forms a groundwork of circumstances, antecedent to the action but necessary to explain it. < Frequently the whole action of a Greek drama would form merely the climax of a modern play. The Greek custom of representing four dramas in a day placed a

natural limit on the length of each play and on the range of the action. The romantic drama aimed at a more comprehensive representation ; a single play in its scope and compass approached to the dimensions of a Trilogy. Sir Philip Sidney gently ridicules the quickened pace with which time is compelled to move, in order to condense into a few hours the events of as many years. 'Now of time they are more liberall, for ordinary it is that two young Princes fall in love. After many traverces, she is got with childe, delivered of a faire boy, he is lost, groweth a man, falls in love, and is ready to get another child, and all this in two hours' space.'

The dramatic theme is frequently enlarged in modern tragedy so that the entire process may be traced, from the moment when a deed lies dormant as a germ in the mind, till it has ripened into action and unfolded itself in all its consequences. As the period embraced by the action is extended, and the relations with the outer world become more complex, it is only natural that the characters should expand in new directions and undergo essential changes. A wider range was here opened up for dramatic portraiture. It was not, of course, an untried region of art. The Greeks had exhibited character as moulded by the plot and developed under pressure from without, or through impulses which operated from within. Indeed every drama must, in some measure, show the play and counter-

play of those forces which rule the outer and the inner world. The process by which feeling is consolidated into a deed cannot but leave its mark on the mind of the agent. Antigone suffers the natural reaction from high-strained emotion. Neoptolemus becomes a changed person in the progress of the action, though the change is merely to restore him to his true self, which for the moment he had lost. Even Prometheus, grand in his immobility, is in some sense worked upon by the persons and the scenes which pass before him. His will, unconquerable from the first, expresses itself in tones still more defiant at the close.

In all these instances we have character in process of becoming. Wherever, in short, an action grows and expands according to dramatic laws, character, or at least feeling, must move in concert with it. But the extent to which growth and movement in the character accompany the march of the action is very various. The ancient stage furnishes us with no such complete instance of character-development as we have, for example, in Macbeth. It is the peculiar delight of the moderns to follow the course of such an evolution, to be present at the determining moment of a man's career, to watch the dawning of a passion, the shaping of a purpose, and to pursue the deed to its final accomplishment. We desire not only to know what a man was, and how he came to be it,



but to be shown each step in the process, each link in the chain ; and we are the more interested if we find that the gradual course of the dramatic movement has wrought a complete change in the original character. In this sense we may admit that the modern drama has brought the delineation of character into new and stronger relief.

But when we have taken into account all the minor variations of structure which the modern drama has undergone ; when we have allowed for the greater complexity of the plot, the greater prominence given to the more subjective and individual aspects of character, the deeper interest taken in the unfolding of character and in its manifold developments ; yet plot and character, in their essential relation, still hold the place sketched for them in the *Poetics*, and assigned to them on the Greek stage. Plot is artistically the first necessity of the drama. For the drama, in its true idea, is a poetical representation of a complete and typical action, whose lines converge on a determined end ; which evolves itself out of human emotion and human will in such a manner that action and character are each in turn the outcome of the other.

Such a drama was the creation of Greece, and of all her creations perhaps the greatest. Epic and lyric poetry have everywhere sprung up independently. Dramatic spectacles, religious or secular, are found in every country, and at all periods of civilisation.

Dramatic narratives, such as the *Book of Job*, dramatic lyrics, such as the *Song of Solomon*, are among the forms of composition which meet us in the Old Testament. Lyrical dramas, which in their constituent elements recall the first beginnings of the Greek drama, have existed in China and Japan. India has produced vast poems which pass under the name of dramas, but which want both the unity of action and the spiritual freedom which the drama proper implies. The Greek drama is the harmonious fusion of two elements which never before had been perfectly blended. Lyrical in its origin, epic in the nature of its materials, it is at once an expression of passionate feeling and the story of an action; it embodies emotion, but an emotion which grows into will and issues in deeds. If the lyrical utterance of feeling had remained the dominant, as it was the original element in a Greek tragedy, it would have been left for some other people to create the tragic drama. As it was, the Greeks fixed unalterably its distinctive form and the artistic principle of its structure.

## CHAPTER X

### THE GENERALISING POWER OF COMEDY

POETRY, we say—following Aristotle—is an expression of the universal element in human life; or, in equivalent modern phrase, it idealises life. Now the word ‘idealise’ has two senses, which have given rise to some confusion. Writers on aesthetics generally mean by it the representation of an object in its permanent and essential aspects, in a form that answers to its true idea; disengaged from the passing accidents that cling to individuality, and from disturbing influences that obscure the type. What is local or transient is either omitted or reduced to subordinate rank; the particular is enlarged till it broadens out into the human and the universal. In this sense ‘the ideal’ is ‘the universal’ of the *Poetics*. But there is another and more popular use of the term, by which an idealised representation implies not only an absence of disturbing influences in the manifestation of the idea, but a positive accession of what is beautiful. The object is seized in some

happy and characteristic moment, its lines of grace or strength are more firmly drawn, its beauty is heightened and the object ennobled, while the likeness to the original is retained. The two senses of the word coincide in the higher regions of art. When the subject matter of artistic representation already possesses a grandeur or beauty of its own, its dominant characteristics will be made more prominent by the suppression of accidental features, and the ideal form that results will have added elements of beauty. The leading characters in tragedy, while true to human nature, stand out above the common man in stature and dignity, just as, by the art of the portrait-painter, a likeness is reproduced and yet idealised.<sup>1</sup> In the very act of eliminating the accidental a higher beauty and perfection are discovered than was manifested in the world of reality. Tragedy, therefore, in the persons of its heroes combines both kinds of idealisation; it universalises, and in so doing it embellishes.

Idealised portraiture does not, as has been already observed,<sup>2</sup> consist in presenting characters of flawless virtue. Aristotle's tragic hero, as delineated in the *Poetics* (ch. xiii.), is by no means free from faults or failings. The instance, again,

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xv. 8, ἀποδιδόντες τὴν ἰδίαν μορφήν ὁμοίους ποιοῦντες καλλίους γράφουσιν.

<sup>2</sup> p. 228.

of Achilles as a poetic type of character, who in spite of defects has a moral nobility entitling him to rank as ideal, shows that the idealising process, as understood by Aristotle, does not imply the omission of all defects.<sup>1</sup> In general it may be said that some particular quality or group of qualities must be thrown into relief; some commanding faculty heightened, provided that in so doing the equipoise of character, which constitutes a typical human being, is not disturbed. The ideal is that which is raised above the trivial and accidental; by virtue of a universal element which answers to the true idea of the object, it transcends the limitations of the individual. Even vicious characters are not entirely excluded from tragedy on Aristotle's theory,<sup>2</sup> though the villain may not hold the position of 'protagonist. The saying attributed to Sophocles, *αὐτὸς μὲν οἷους δεῖ ποιεῖν, Εὐριπίδην δὲ οἷοι εἶσι*, does not bear the interpretation sometimes assigned to it, that the characters of Sophocles are patterns of heroic goodness, while those of Euripides are the men and women of real life.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* xv. 8.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 224 and 310.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* xxv. 6, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ἐὰν ἐπιτιμᾶται ὅτι οὐκ ἀληθῆ, ἀλλ' ἴσως <ὡς> δεῖ—οἷον καὶ Σοφοκλῆς ἔφη αὐτὸς μὲν οἷους δεῖ ποιεῖν, Εὐριπίδην δὲ οἷοι εἶσιν—ταύτη λυτέον. There is some doubt as to the literal rendering of the words αὐτὸς μὲν οἷους δεῖ ποιεῖν. Vahlen and most editors understand εἶναι with οἷους δεῖ, 'men as they should be,' whereas strict grammar undoubtedly requires us to understand ποιεῖν, 'men as the poet should repre-

meaning is that the characters of Sophocles answer to the higher dramatic requirements; they are typical of universal human nature in its deeper and abiding aspects; they are ideal, but ideally human; whereas Euripides reproduced personal idiosyncrasies and the trivial features of everyday reality.

Objection may be taken to the distinction drawn between the two meanings of the word 'idealise,' on the ground that they run into one another and fundamentally mean the same thing. It may be urged that so far as an object assumes its universal form, ridding itself of non-essentials, it will stand out in perfect beauty; for all ugliness, all imperfection, all evil itself, is an accident of nature, a derangement and disturbance by which things fall short of their true idea. To

sent them,' 'men as they ought to be drawn.' In the first edition I inclined to the latter view.

The general context, however, and the equivalent phrases in this chapter (*οἷα εἶναι δεῖ* § 1, <ὥς> *δεῖ* § 6, *βέλτιον* § 7, *πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον* § 17) point strongly to the first interpretation. It has in its favour this further fact (as is justly observed by Mr. R. C. Seaton, *Classical Review*, vol. xi. No. 6), that the saying of Sophocles is thus couched in a less arrogant form. Accepting this view we must explain *οἷους δεῖ* (and similarly <ὥς> *δεῖ* § 6) as a kind of shorthand expression used, with more than Aristotelian brevity and disregard of grammar, to denote the ideal in poetry.

Even if *εἶναι* is to be understood with *δεῖ*, the *δεῖ* will still be the 'ought' of aesthetic obligation, not the moral 'ought.' It has been previously shown, however, that the aesthetic ideal of character in the *Poetics* implies a high, though not a perfect morality.

represent the universal would thus in its ultimate analysis imply the representation of the object in the noblest and fairest forms in which it can clothe itself according to artistic laws. Comedy, which concerns itself with the follies and foibles, the flaws and imperfections of mankind, cannot on this reasoning idealise or universalise its object.

Now, it may or may not be that evil or imperfection can be shown to be a necessary and ultimate element in the universe; but the point seems to be one for philosophy to discuss, not for art to assume. Art, when it seeks to give a comprehensive picture of human life, must accept such flaws as belong to the normal constitution of man. At what precise point imperfections are to be regarded as accidental, abnormal, irregular; as presenting so marked a deviation from the type as to be unworthy of lasting embodiment in art, is a problem whose answer will vary at different stages of history, and will admit of different applications according to the particular art that is in question. Certain imperfections, however, will probably always be looked on as permanent features of our common humanity. With these defects comedy amuses itself, discovering the inconsistencies which underlie life and character, and exhibiting evil not as it is in its essential nature, but as a thing to be laughed at rather than hated. Thus limiting its range of vision, comedy is able to

give artistic expression to certain types of character which can hardly find a place in serious art.

Again, it must not be forgotten that the individual character, considered by itself, is not the same as this character considered in its place in the drama. A character universalised may, if regarded alone, still be 'ugly,' and yet it may contribute to the beauty of the whole. In that sense we can continue to call it 'ugly' only by a kind of abstraction. Or to put it otherwise,—evil regarded in its essential nature may be ugly; but, shown in the action of the comedy to be nugatory and ridiculous, it ceases to be ugly; it is an element in a fact which is beautiful.

Aristotle draws no distinction between the universality which is proper to tragedy and comedy respectively. Each of these, as a branch of the poetic art, embodies the type rather than the individual, and to this extent they have a common function.

An Athenian of the fifth century would hardly have singled out comedy as an example of poetic generalisation. The large admixture of personal satire in the old Attic comedy would rather have suggested the view that the main ingredient in comic mirth is the malicious pleasure afforded by the discomfiture of another. And, in fact, Plato, in the subtle analysis he gives in the *Philebus*<sup>1</sup> of

<sup>1</sup> *Philebus* 48-50.



the emotions excited by comedy, proceeds on some such assumption. The pleasure of the ludicrous springs, he says, from the sight of another's misfortune, the misfortune, however, being a kind of self-ignorance that is powerless to inflict hurt. A certain malice is here of the essence of comic enjoyment. Inadequate as this may be, if taken as a complete account of the ludicrous, it nevertheless shows a profound insight into some of the chief artistic modes of its manifestation. Plato anticipates, but goes deeper than Hobbes, whose well-known words are worth recalling: 'The passion of laughter is nothing else but a sudden glory, arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison of the infirmity of others or with our own formerly.'

The laughter that has in it a malicious element, and that implies in some sense the abasement of another, does not satisfy Aristotle's conception of the idea of the ludicrous. His definition in the *Poetics*<sup>1</sup> carries the analysis a step farther than it had been carried by Plato. 'The ludicrous,' he says, 'consists in some defect or ugliness which is not painful or destructive. To take an obvious example, the comic mask is ugly and distorted, but does not imply pain.' The phrase 'not painful or destruc-

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* v. 1, τὸ γὰρ γελοῖόν ἐστιν ἀμάρτημά τι καὶ αἰσχρὸν ἀνάνδρον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν, οἷον εὐθύς τὸ γελοῖον πρόσωπον αἰσχρὸν τι καὶ διεστραμμένον ἄνευ ὀδύνης.

tive'—either, that is, to the object of laughter, or sympathetically to the subject—is a remarkable contribution to the idea under discussion. Still more significant is the omission of malice, which to Plato had seemed an essential ingredient.

The pleasure, therefore, of the pure ludicrous is not to be explained, as some tell us to-day, by the disinterested delight of primitive man in the infliction of suffering. It does not consist in a gratified feeling of malignity, softened indeed by civilisation, but ultimately to be resolved into a kind of savage mirth. A good joke becomes, indeed, a little more pungent if it is seasoned with malice, but, even without the malice, laughter may be provoked. And, according to Aristotle, the quality that provokes laughter is a certain 'ugliness,' a 'defect' or 'deformity.' These words, primarily applicable to the physically ugly, the disproportionate, the unsymmetrical, will include the frailties, follies, and infirmities of human nature, as distinguished from its graver vices or crimes. Further, taking account of the elements which enter into the idea of beauty in Aristotle, we shall probably not unduly strain the meaning of the expression, if we extend it to embrace the incongruities, absurdities, or cross-purposes of life, its blunders and discords, its imperfect correspondences and adjustments, and that in matters intellectual as well as moral.

Aristotle's definition is indeed still wanting in

exactness; for though the ludicrous is always incongruous, yet the incongruous (even limited as it is here) is not always ludicrous. Incongruity, in order to be ludicrous, requires a transition, a change of mood, resulting in the discovery either of an unexpected resemblance where there was unlikeness, or of an unexpected unlikeness where there was resemblance. There is always a blending of contrasted feelings. The pleasure of the ludicrous thus arises from the shock of surprise at a painless incongruity. It sometimes allies itself with malice, sometimes with sympathy, and sometimes again is detached from both. For our present purpose, however, it is enough to note that, although Aristotle's definition is hardly complete, it has the merit of recognising the pure ludicrous, which is awakened by the perception of incongruity, and provokes no malignant or triumphant laughter. The definition harmonises well with his exclusion of personal satire and galling caricature from genuine comedy, and with his theory of the generalising power of poetry.

Indeed, Aristotle selects comedy as a salient illustration of what he means by the representation of the universal.<sup>1</sup> He points to the comedy of his

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ix. 4-5, οὗ (sc. τοῦ καθόλου) στοχάζεται ἡ ποίησις ὀνόματα ἐπιτιθεμένη . . . ἐπὶ μὲν οὖν τῆς κωμωδίας ἤδη τοῦτο δῆλον γέγονεν· συστήσαντες γὰρ τὸν μῦθον διὰ τῶν εἰκότων οὐ (οὕτω MSS.) τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόματα ὑποτιθέασιν, καὶ οὐχ ὥσπερ οἱ ἰαμβοποιοὶ περὶ τὸν καθ' ἕκαστον ποιοῦσιν.

I have ventured to admit into the text my conjecture οὐ

own day, in which the tendency was shown to discard the use of historical names, and adopt names which  
 \* suggest characteristic qualities. It was part of the effort, which, as he says, poetry makes to express the universal. The name had only to be heard in order that the type to which the person belonged might be recognised; much in the same way as in the New Comedy the Boor, the Parasite, and other

(or οὐχὶ) τὰ τυχόντα for οὕτω τὰ τυχόντα of the MSS.: 'the plot is first constructed; then *characteristic* or *appropriate* names are affixed.' (For οὐ τὰ τυχ. cf. *Poet.* vii. 4, xxvi. 7, *Pol.* v. (viii.) 5. 1339 b 32, οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν ἡδονήν.) The Arabic version which has a negative ('nequaquam,' Margoliouth) instead of οὕτω supports the correction. By a similar error in this very chapter, ix. 2. 1451 a 36, Δ<sup>c</sup> gives οὕτω where the apographa rightly read οὐ τό.

The thought of §§ 4 and 5 will, with the correction, be of this kind: 'It is at this universality that poetry aims in the names (i.e. the expressive names) she gives to the characters. This generalising tendency (which for a reason about to be explained has been neglected in Tragedy) has by this time clearly shown itself in Comedy, where we see at once from the name that the person is not an individual but a type.' The words οὐ στοχάζεται ἡ ποίησις ὀνόματα ἐπιτιθεμένη present some difficulty on any interpretation. In my view, the phrase is slightly inexact. It is not true of *all* poetry that it illustrates the principle of generality in its name-giving. The Aristophanic comedy, indeed, affords many instances of appropriate or expressive names, e.g. Dicaeopolis, Euelpides, Peithetaerus, Pheidippides. But it is in the Comedy of his own day that Aristotle sees the principle clearly emerge (ἡδὴ τοῦτο δῆλον); the last vestige of the *ιαμβικὴ ἰδέα* here disappears. Comedy is uppermost in Aristotle's mind, though he speaks loosely of ἡ ποίησις. Strictly he should have said οὐ στοχάζεται ἡ ποίησις <οὐ τὰ τυχόντα> (or <πεποιημένα>) ὀνόματα ἐπιτιθεμένη. But the context corrects the overstatement. The next sentence by its explicit mention of

types were known on the stage by their familiar masks. It may be added that not the names only of the characters, but the extant titles of plays composed by writers of the Middle Comedy, imply the same effort after generalisation. They remind us of the character-sketches of Theophrastus. Such are 'the Peevish man' (ὁ Δύσκολος), 'the Fault-Comedy and of οὐ τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόματα (if this is the right reading) practically limits the reference.

Professor W. R. Hardie has furnished me with the following passage from Donatus on Ter. *Ad.* 1, which well illustrates οὐ τὰ τυχόντα: 'nomina personarum, in comoediis dumtaxat, habere debent rationem et etymologiam: etenim absurdum est comicum aperte argumenta confingere, vel nomen personae incongruum dare, vel officium quod sit a nomine diversum.' I am not aware whether Donatus shows elsewhere any influence of Aristotelian ideas, nor do I know how far back the principle can be traced.

The whole passage (§§ 4-5) is generally taken somewhat differently:—'It is at this universality that poetry aims *even while* giving *individual* names. In the case of Comedy this is already clear: its writers first construct their plots, and then, and not till then (οὕτω), affix *such names as first come to hand* (τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόμ.),' τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόματα being opposed to τὰ γενόμενα ὀνόμ., 'real names.' Three objections occur to this rendering: (1) The bare participle, ὀνόμ. ἐπιτιθεμένη, can hardly sustain this strong concessive force 'even while giving.' (2) To translate the simple ὀνόματα as *individual* names is to supply the very word on which the whole point of the contrast depends. (3) The phrase τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόματα is singularly ill-adapted to describe the names of the Middle Comedy, which were not given 'at random,' 'at haphazard,' but were for the most part appropriate and representative. The sense can only be satisfied by the somewhat forced meaning 'such names as the writers choose.' If the correction of οὕτω to οὐ is rejected, I would in the last resort accept this meaning, at the same time taking οὐ στοχ. ἢ ποίησ. ὀνόμ. ἐπιτιθ. in the manner first mentioned.

finder' (ὁ Μεμψίμοιρος), 'the Busybody' (ὁ Πολυπράγμων), 'the Boor' (ὁ Ἀγροίκος), 'the Hermit' (ὁ Μονότροπος). Other pieces again bear the name of a profession or occupation, as 'the Boxer' (ὁ Πύκτης), 'the Charioteer' (ὁ Ἡνίοχος), 'the Soldier' (ὁ Στρατιώτης), 'the Painter' (ὁ Ζωγράφος); and others are called after a people,—'the Thessalians,' 'the Thebans,' 'the Corinthians,'—and may be assumed, incidentally at least, to portray or satirise national characteristics.

In various places Aristotle indicates the distinction between comedy proper, which playfully touches the faults and foibles of humanity, and personal satire (ἡ λαμβικὴ ἰδέα)<sup>1</sup> or invective (λοιδορία). The one kind of composition is a representation of the universal, the other of the particular; the one is identified by Aristotle with the comedy of his own day, the other is intended to include the old political comedy of Athens. He does not expressly mention Aristophanes, but by implication he reckons him among 'lampooners' (οἱ λαμβοποιοί),<sup>2</sup> and among those who employed coarse or abusive language (αἰσχρολογία), instead of delicate innuendo (ὑπόνοια).<sup>3</sup> He shows a marked

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* v. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* ix. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Eth. Nic.* iv. 8. 1128 a 22, ἴδοι δ' ἂν τις καὶ ἐκ τῶν κωμῳδιῶν τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ τῶν καινῶν· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἦν γελοῖον ἢ αἰσχρολογία, τοῖς δὲ μᾶλλον ἢ ὑπόνοια. Cf. *Frag. περὶ κωμῳδίας* (*Cramer Anecd.*): διαφέρει ἡ κωμῳδία τῆς λοιδορίας,

preference for the Middle Comedy as presenting generalised types of character in conformity with the fundamental laws of poetry.

It is doubtful whether Aristotle had any perception of the genius and imaginative power of Aristophanes. The characters of the Aristophanic drama are not fairly judged if they are thought of simply as historical individuals, who are subjected to a merciless caricature. Socrates, Cleon, Euripides are types which represent certain movements in philosophy, politics, and poetry. They are labelled with historic names; a few obvious traits are borrowed which recall the well-known personalities; but the dramatic personages are in no sense the men who are known to us from history. Such poetic truth as they possess is derived simply from their typical quality. It is not, indeed, in the manner of Aristophanes to attempt any faithful portraiture of life or character. His imagination works by giving embodiment to what is abstract. His love of bold personification is in part inherited from his predecessors on the Attic stage: Cratinus had introduced Laws (*Νόμοι*) and Riches (*Πλούτοι*) as his choruses. But Aristophanes goes farther; he seems to think through materialised ideas. He personifies the Just and the Unjust Logic, and

*ἐπεὶ ἡ μὲν λοιδορία ἀπαρακαλύπτως τὰ προσόντα κακὰ διέξεισιν,  
ἡ δὲ δεῖται τῆς καλουμένης ἐμφάσεως: where ἐμφάσεως = the  
Aristotelian ὑπονοίᾳ.*

brings them before us as lawcourt disputants; he incarnates a metaphor such as the philosopher in the clouds, the jurymen with waspish temper, mankind with their airy hopes. The same bent of mind leads him to give a concrete form to the forces and tendencies of the age, and to embody them in actual persons. A play of Aristophanes is a dramatised debate, an *ἀγών*, in which the persons represent opposing principles; for in form the piece is always combative, though the fight may be but a mock fight. These principles are brought into collision and worked out to their most irrational conclusions, little regard being paid to the coherence of the parts and still less to propriety of character. The Aristophanic comedy, having transported real persons into a world where the conditions of reality are neglected, strips them of all that is truly individual and distinctive, it invests them with the attributes of a class or makes them representative of an idea.

In the Middle Comedy and still more in the New Comedy we observe a change in the manner of poetic generalisation. We quit the fantastic world of Aristophanes with its audacious allegories and grotesque types of character. There is now a closer study of real life and a finer delineation of motive. The action by degrees gains strength and consistency, till, like that of tragedy, it has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Character



and action become more intimately united. The typical follies and failings of mankind are woven into a plot, in which moral probability takes the place of the arbitrary sequence of loosely connected scenes and incidents. The broad characteristics of humanity receive a more faithful, if a more prosaic rendering. Moreover, the great ideas of Hellenism disengage themselves from local and accidental influences and make their appeal to a universal human sentiment. In Aristotle's day the movement here described was but partially developed. He did not live to see the masterpieces of Menander, which were the poetic embodiment of his own theory. The Middle Comedy which suggested to him his ideal had not indeed altogether dropped the element of personal satire; it merely replaced the invective formerly levelled against public men by a gentle raillery of poets and philosophers. Still Aristotle discerned accurately the direction in which comedy was travelling, and not improbably contributed by his reasoned principles and precepts to carry forward the literary movement already initiated.

We have seen that in the *Poetics* (ch. ix.) he draws no distinction between the generalisation proper to tragedy and comedy respectively. It is an important omission, though in a treatise so incomplete as the *Poetics*, in which we have a bare fragment of the section devoted to comedy, we

are hardly warranted in assuming that he saw no difference in this respect between the two forms of poetry. Yet critics give ingenious reasons for what they conceive to be the orthodox Aristotelian view. Lessing, to whom Aristotle's authority was that of a lawgiver in art, and who admits that he considers the *Poetics* 'as infallible as the *Elements of Euclid*,' having once satisfied himself that Aristotle had pronounced upon the matter in dispute, enforces at length the conclusion that the characters in comedy are 'general,' precisely in the same sense as those of tragedy.<sup>1</sup> He controverts the saying of Diderot that 'Comedy has species, tragedy has individuals,' and the similar observation of Hurd that 'Comedy makes all characters general, tragedy particular.'<sup>2</sup>

But, surely, there is a real distinction between the generalisation of tragedy and of comedy, though it is not exactly expressed in the sayings above quoted. Comedy looking at a single aspect of life, at the follies, the imperfections, the inconsistencies of men, withdraws its attention from the graver issues which concern the end of conduct. It takes those moments when life appears to be idle and distorted, a thing of vanity and nothingness; it brings out its negative side, its inherent limitations; it exhibits situations in which the

<sup>1</sup> Lessing, *Hamb. Dram.* pp. 458-470.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 468.

sense of the ideal is lost under an outward gaiety, or its realisation wholly frustrated. It does not detach the essentials of life from the unreal appearances; and, though some elements of tragic earnestness may underlie the representation, comedy cannot, while remaining within its own strict limits, present, as tragedy does, a rounded and complete action, an image of universal human nature. In respect of character-drawing, its usual method—so far as it maintains itself as a distinct artistic type—is to embody a dominant characteristic or a leading passion, so that the single attribute becomes the man.

A character so created, exhibiting an ideal of covetousness, misanthropy, or whatever the quality may be, almost of necessity runs to caricature. It is framed on lines of impossible simplicity. The single quality, which in nature is organically related to other impulses and powers, is isolated and exaggerated. The process is one of abstraction, and corresponds to an original one-sidedness in the comic view of life. Even Molière portrays abstract qualities rather than living men. Not that comedy in its generalising effort suppresses particulars. No detail is too trivial for it, no utterance too momentary, no desires too purely egotistic, if only they can be made to serve the general effect; but the details it accentuates are of a different kind from those which tragedy admits. In the passing and

unreal appearances of life it finds everywhere material for mirth. In a sense it individualises everything, no less truly than in another sense it generalises all. What it can hardly achieve as a purely sportive activity is to combine these two aspects in ethical portraiture.

The line that severs tragedy and comedy is not, indeed, so sharply drawn by modern dramatic art as it was in the ancient world; and characters have been created in which the serious and the comic element interpenetrate one another. By the close alliance of sympathy with humour—an alliance which was still imperfect in antiquity—the most far-reaching results have been produced affecting the range and meaning of the ludicrous. Humour, enriched by sympathy, directs its observation to the more serious realities of life. It looks below the surface, it rediscovers the hidden incongruities and deeper discords to which use and wont have deadened our perception. It finds everywhere the material both for laughter and tears; and pathos henceforth becomes the companion of humour. The humorist does not, like the satirist, stand apart from men in fancied superiority. He recognises his own kinship with the humanity which provokes him to mirth. He sees around him shattered ideals; he observes the irony of destiny; he is aware of discords and imperfections, but accepts them all with playful acquiescence, and is saddened

and amused in turn. Humour is the meeting-point of tragedy and comedy; and the saying of Socrates in the *Symposium* has in great measure been justified, that the genius of tragedy and of comedy is the same.<sup>1</sup>

It is chiefly through humour of the deeper sort that modern comedy has acquired its generalising power. To the humorist there is no such thing as individual folly, but only folly universal in a world of fools. Humour annihilates the finite. As Coleridge says, 'The little is made great and the great little, in order to destroy both, because all is equal in contrast with the infinite.' Uncle Toby, in *Tristram Shandy*, with his campaigns and his fortresses, is an epitome of the follies of mankind. In the greatest creations of humour, such as *Don Quixote*, we have a summary of the contradictions of human life, of the disproportion between the idea and the fact, between soul and body, between the brilliant day-dream and the waking reality.

This universalising power of humour is not, indeed, unknown in ancient literature. The *Birds* of Aristophanes is a splendid example to the contrary. But, if we restrict our attention, as we have chiefly done here, to the portraiture of character that is individual while at the same time it is universal,

<sup>1</sup> Plato *Sympos.* 223 D, τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀνδρὸς εἶναι κωμῳδίαν καὶ τραγῳδίαν ἐπίστασθαι ποιεῖν.

we are at once aware of a distinction. Don Quixote and Sancho are living and breathing beings; each is a tissue of contradictions, yet each is a true personality. The actors in an Aristophanic play are transparent caricatures. In these half-grotesque impersonations the individual is entirely subordinated to the type; and not here only, but also—so far as we can judge—in the more minute and realistic art of the New Comedy, where differences of age, sex, family relationship, or social condition are carefully delineated, coexisting, however, with strongly marked features of a common humanity. Greek tragedy, on the other hand, like all tragedy of the highest order, combines in one harmonious representation the individual and the universal. Whereas comedy tends to merge the individual in the type, tragedy manifests the type through the individual. In brief, it may be said that comedy, in its unmixed sportive form, creates personified ideals, tragedy creates idealised persons.

## CHAPTER XI

### POETIC UNIVERSALITY IN GREEK LITERATURE

IT is characteristic of Aristotle's method that he starts from concrete facts, and that his rules are in the main a generalisation from these facts. He is, in the first instance, a Greek summing up Greek experience. The treasure-house of Greek art and poetry lay open before him ; a vast body of literature, lost to us, was in his hands. He looked back upon the past, conscious, it would seem, that the great creative era was closed, and that in the highest regions, at least, of artistic composition the Greek genius had reached the summit of its powers. The time was ripe for criticism to take a survey of the whole field of poetic literature. Aristotle approaches the subject as the historian of poetry, but his generalising faculty impels him to seek the law in the facts, and from the observed effects of different kinds of poetry to penetrate to the essential character of each. If his rules have proved in most cases to be not merely rules of Greek art but principles of art, it is because first, the Greek poets contain so much

that appeals to universal human nature, and because next, Aristotle was able from the mass of literature before him to disengage and to formulate this universal element. The laws that he discovers are those which were already impressed on the chief productions of the Greek genius.

We can hardly claim, as has been sometimes done for Aristotle, that he rose above the traditions and limitations of the Hellenic mind, and took up the attitude of the purely human or cosmopolitan spectator. On some points, doubtless, he expresses opinions which contradict the current ideas of his age. He admits that in certain cases the tragic poet may take entirely fictitious subjects instead of the well-known legends.<sup>1</sup> He holds that metre, which was popularly thought to be the most essential element of poetry, is in truth the least essential, if indeed it is essential at all.<sup>2</sup> He leaves it at least an open question whether the drama may not still admit of new developments.<sup>3</sup> But in general it remains true that Greek experience was the starting-point and basis of his theory, though that experience had to be sifted, condensed, and interpreted before any coherent doctrine of poetry could be framed or judgment passed on individual authors. Aristotle does not accept even the greater tragedians as all of equal authority, or all their works as alike canons of art; and it is a mistake to assume that the

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ix. 8.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 141 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Poet.* iv. 11.



precepts of the *Poetics* must, if there is no indication to the contrary, harmonise with the practice of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, if not of minor writers also. His rules are based on a discriminating and selective principle, and imply some criterion for judging of artistic excellence.

The principles of art as laid down by Aristotle faithfully reflect the Greek genius in the exclusion of certain tendencies to which other nations have yielded. First, pure realism is forbidden; that is, the literal and prosaic imitation which reaches perfection in a jugglery of the senses by which the copy is mistaken for the original. In the decay of Greek art this kind of ingenuity came into vogue, but it never found favour in the best times. Even the custom of setting up votive statues of athletes who had been thrice victors in the games did not lead to a realism such as in Egypt was the outcome of the practice which secured the immortality of a dead man through the material support of a portrait statue. Next, pure symbolism is forbidden,—those fantastic shapes which attracted the imagination of Oriental nations, and which were known to the Greeks themselves in the arts of Egypt and Assyria. The body of a lion with the head of a man and the wings and feathers of a bird was an attempt to render abstract attributes in forms which do not correspond with the idea. Instead of the concrete image of a living organism the result is an impossible

compound, which in transcending nature violates nature's laws. The *Odyssey*, on the other hand, with its impossible adventures by sea and land, its magic ship, its enchanted islands, its men transformed into swine, its vision of the world below, is constructed according to the laws of poetic truth. The whole is a faithful representation of human life and action, the irrational elements (*τὰ ἄλογα*) being but accessories that do not disturb the main impression. They are presented to the imagination with such vividness and coherence that the impossible becomes plausible, the fiction looks like truth.

That these principles were arrived at after due observation of Oriental art is very improbable. Familiar as Aristotle must have been with the external characteristics of this art, and with specimens of Greek workmanship which had been moulded under its influence, there is no express allusion to Eastern works of art in his writings. The omission is not explained simply by saying that he did not set himself the task of writing a treatise on sculpture, and that his sole concern was with poetry. For, had he given serious thought to the plastic art of the East, as he certainly did to that of his own country, some trace of it would probably have been found in his writings; just as his observation of Greek models led him to drop many detached remarks on painting and sculpture. To learn a barbarous tongue, however, was so uncongenial to

a Greek that even the all-acquisitive mind of Aristotle was content to remain ignorant of every literature but his own; and it may similarly have seemed a waste of labour to study the symbolism of a barbarous art.<sup>1</sup> Oriental art on the face of it was not a rational and intelligent creation; it had no counterpart in the world of reality.

The Greek imagination of the classical age is under the strict control of reason, it is limited by a sense of measure and a faculty of self-restraint. It does not like the Oriental run riot in its own prodigal wealth. We are always conscious of a reserve of power, a temperate strength which knows

<sup>1</sup> It is strange how little notice the Greeks took of symbolical art. Dion Chrysostom (*circa* A.D. 100) *Ῥολυμπ. Or.* xii. 404 R in a speech put into the mouth of Phidias defends the plastic art of Greece, which expresses the divine nature in human form. The human body serves indeed as a symbol of the invisible, but it is a nobler symbolism than that of the barbarians, who in animal shapes discover the divine image. Philostratus *Vit. Apoll.* vi. 19 discusses the point at greater length. Apollonius is here supporting the method of Greek sculpture as contrasted with the grotesque forms under which the gods were represented in Egypt (*ἄτοπα καὶ γελοῖα θεῶν εἶδη*). Thespision, with whom he is conversing, argues that the wisdom of the Egyptians is shown chiefly in this, that they give up the daring attempt directly to reproduce the deity, and by symbol and allegory produce a more impressive effect: *σοφὸν γὰρ εἶπερ τι Αἰγυπτίων καὶ τὸ μὴ θρασύνεσθαι ἐς τὰ τῶν θεῶν εἶδη, συμβολικὰ δὲ αὐτὰ ποιῆσθαι καὶ ὑπονοούμενα, καὶ γὰρ ἄν καὶ σεμνότερα οὕτω φαίνοιτο*. To which Apollonius replies that the effect would have been still more impressive if instead of fashioning a dog or goat or ibis they had offered no visible representation, and left it to the imagination, which is a better artist, to give form and shape to the divinity.

its own resources and employs them without effort and without ostentation. The poet, the historian, the artist, each of them could do much more if he chose, but he does not care to dazzle us. He is bent on seeing truly, on seeing harmoniously, and on expressing what he sees. The materials on which his imagination works are fused and combined according to the laws of what is possible, reasonable, natural. Greek mythology as it has come to us in literature bears on it this mark of reasonableness. Traces indeed there are of an earlier type,—rude and unassimilated elements, flaws which have been left untouched by the shaping hand of the poet or by the constructive genius of the race. But compare Greek mythology with that of other nations, and we cannot but wonder at its freedom from the extravagant and grotesque. The Greeks in creating their gods in their own likeness followed that imperious instinct of their nature which required that every product of their minds should be a harmonious and intelligible creation, not a thing half in the world, half out of it, no hybrid compound of symbolic attributes.

To watch the formation of the Homeric Olympus is to see the Greek mind working in its own artistic fashion. The several tribes,—Achaeans, Argives, Minyae, and a host of others,—have each their local gods and goddesses, uncharacterised,

unspecialised, save by the vague omnipotence of godhead. With the victory of dominant races and the fusion of cults there came a redistribution of functions and attributes that might have issued in unmeaning chaos or in bare abstractions. Not so with the Greeks. From the motley assemblage of tribal divinities the Homeric gods stand out clear and calm as their own statues. The gods of other nations may be but the expression of the people's practical needs, or the abstracted utterance of their thought. The gods of the Greeks are fashioned by a race of artists in accordance with nature, but completing and transcending her. The mythologist notes how in the assignment of their spheres and duties all that is non-essential is eliminated. Attributes which a god already has in common with other gods fall out. The Homeric Olympus is a great gathering of living type-forms whose image henceforth haunted the imagination of the race.

It would not be true to say that the lighter play of fancy is excluded from the literature and mythology of the Greeks. Few nations have taken more delight in weaving airy and poetic fictions apart from all reality, made out of nothing and ending nowhere. Almost all the Greek poets have something of this national taste. It breaks out at moments even in the prose-writers, in Herodotus or Plato. In one domain, that of

comedy, fancy seems at first sight to reign supreme and uncontrolled. It obeys its own laws and revels in its own absurdities. It turns the world upside down, and men and gods follow its bidding. The poet yields in thorough abandonment to the spirit of the festival, he leads the orgy and shares its madness and intoxication. No sooner is he launched on his course than he is carried wherever an exuberant poetic fancy and a gift of inextinguishable laughter lead him. The transitions from jest to earnest are as quick as thought. Whole scenes follow one another in which no single word can be taken seriously. Yet even comedy has its lucid intervals, or rather in its madness there is a method. In its wildest freaks there is some underlying reason, some intelligible drift and purpose. The fantastic license, however, of comedy stands alone in Greek literature. In other departments fancy is much more restrained, more reserved. It breaks through as a sudden and transient light, as gleams that come and go, it does not disturb the serenity of thought.

The Greeks themselves were accustomed to speak of poetic genius as a form of madness, an inspired enthusiasm. It is the doctrine of Plato in the *Ion*, in the *Phaedrus*, in the *Symposium*. Even Aristotle, who sometimes writes as if the faculty of the logician were enough to construct

a poem, says 'poetry is a thing inspired.'<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he more accurately distinguishes two classes of poets,—the man of flexible genius who can take the impress of each character in turn, and the man of fine frenzy, who is lifted out of his proper self, and loses his own personality.<sup>2</sup> In another place we read of a poet who never composed so well as when he was in 'ecstasy' or delirium;<sup>3</sup> but of these compositions no specimens survive. Of the great poets of Greece, however, we can say with certainty that whatever was the exact nature of their madness, inspiration, ecstasy—call it what you will—they never released them-

<sup>1</sup> *Rhet.* iii. 7. 1408 b 19, ἐνθεον γὰρ ἡ ποίησις.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* xvii. 2, διδ' εὐφροῦς ἡ ποιητικὴ ἐστὶν ἡ μανικοῦ· τούτων γὰρ οἱ μὲν εὐπλαστοὶ οἱ δὲ ἐκστατικοὶ εἰσιν. The reading ἐκστατικοί is said to be found in one MS. of Vettori: the other MSS. have ἐξεταστικοί. On the whole the correspondence of the two clauses seems best maintained by reading ἐκστατικοί. Then, οἱ μὲν, i.e. the εὐφρεῖς, are εὐπλαστοί: the finely gifted natures, poets who have the versatility of genius, can take the mould of other characters: whereas οἱ δέ, i.e. the μανικοί, are ἐκστατικοί. If we keep ἐξεταστικοί, οἱ μὲν will refer to μανικοί, οἱ δέ to εὐφρεῖς. By ἐξεταστικοί will be meant a fine instinct of criticism, an artistic judgment, a delicate power of seizing resemblances and differences. In favour of this it may be argued, that the εὐφνῆς has the special gift of a fine critical faculty: cf. *Eth. Nic.* iii. 5. 1114 b 6, ἀλλὰ φύναι δεῖ ὥσπερ ὄψιν ἔχοντα, ἣ κρινεῖ καλῶς . . . καὶ ἔστιν εὐφνῆς ἣ τοῦτο καλῶς πέφυκεν. But in either case the εὐφνῆς has a more conscious and critical faculty than the μανικός. The Arabic version seems to give no help here; Professor Margoliouth tells me it is undecipherable.

<sup>3</sup> *Probl.* xxx. 1. 954 a 38, Μαρακὸς δὲ ὁ Συρακοῦσιος καὶ ἀμείνων ἦν ποιητὴς ὅτ' ἐκσταίῃ.

- selves from the sovereignty of reason. Capricious and inconsequent they were not. Their imaginative creations even in their most fantastic forms obeyed a hidden law.

Lamb's essay on 'The Sanity of True Genius' may be illustrated from Greek poetry as fitly as from Shakespeare. 'So far from the position holding true that great wit (or genius, in our modern way of speaking) has a necessary alliance with insanity, the greatest wits, on the contrary, will ever be found to be the sanest writers. . . . But the true poet dreams being awake. He is not possessed by his subject, but has dominion over it. . . . Where he seems most to recede from humanity he will be found the truest to it. From beyond the scope of Nature if he summon possible existences, he subjugates them to the law of her consistency. He is beautifully loyal to that sovereign directress, even when he appears most to betray and desert her.' The perfect sanity of the Greek

- genius is intimately connected with its universality. For is not insanity a kind of disordered individualism? The madman is an egoist; he takes his own fancies as the measure of all things. He does not correct his impressions, or compare them with those of others, or bring them into harmony with external fact. The test of a man's sanity is the relation in which his mind stands to the universal. We call a man sane when his ideas



not only form a coherent whole in themselves, but fit in with the laws and facts of the outer world and with the universal human reason. Is not all this in keeping with Aristotle's theory that the effort of poetry is towards the universal; that it represents the permanent possibilities of human nature, the essentials rather than the accidents? The poet does not on the one hand create at random or by guesswork, nor yet does he merely record what has happened. He tells what may happen according to laws of internal probability or necessity. The sequence of poetry is not the empirical sequence of fact but the logical or conceivable sequence of ideas; it eliminates chance and discovers unity and significance in characters and events.

All great poetry and art fulfil this law of universality, but none perhaps so perfectly as the poetry and art of the Greeks. Take a single instance,—the delineation of female character in Greek poetry. The heroines of Homer and of the tragedians are broadly and unmistakably human. In real life woman is less individual than man; she runs less into idiosyncrasies, she conforms rather to the general type. This however, it may be said, is owing to the deference she pays to the conventional rules of society, it is due to artificial causes that do not reach to the foundations of character. But an inwardly eccentric woman is

also rare. Go below the surface and you find that with all outward marks of difference, whether of fashion or of manner, and in spite of a caprice that has become proverbial, female character can be reduced to certain elemental types of womanhood. These essential types are few. Maiden, wife, mother, daughter, sister,—here are the great determining relations of life. They form the groundwork of character. Accident may modify character, circumstances may stamp it with a particular expression, and bring into relief this or that dominant feature. But there remains an ideal mould in which the type is cast. Once the deeper springs of feeling are moved, circumstances are thrust aside, and a woman's action may almost with certainty be predicted.

The superiority of the Greeks over all but the very greatest of the moderns in portraying female character, is probably due to their power of seizing and expressing the universal side of human nature —that side which is primary and fundamental in woman. They 'follow,' as Coleridge says of Shakespeare, 'the main march of the human affections.' The vulgar and obtrusive elements of personality are cast off, and in proportion as the characters are divested of what is purely individual, do they gain in interest and elevation. Penelope, ✓ Nausicaa, Andromache, Antigone, Iphigenia, are beings far less complex than the heroines of a

dozen novels that come out now in a single year. Their beauty and truth lie precisely in their typical humanity. Nor, in gaining universal significance, do the women of Greek literature fade into abstract types. The finer shades of character are not excluded by the simplicity with which the main lines are drawn. In discarding what is accidental their individuality is not obliterated but deepened and enriched; for it is not disordered emotion or perplexity of motive that makes a character poetical, but power of will or power of love. Attentive study of such a poetic creation as *Antigone* reveals innumerable subtle traits illustrative of the general principle of Greek art by which the utmost variety of detail is admitted, if only it contributes to the total impression and is subject to a controlling unity of design.

For many centuries the standing quarrel of Greek literature had been between the poets and the philosophers. Poetry, said the philosophers, is all fiction, and immoral fiction too; philosophy seeks the good and the true. Plato, inheriting the ancient dislike of the wise men towards poetry, banished the poets from his ideal republic. Aristotle would heal the strife. He discovers a meeting-point of poetry and philosophy in the relation in which they stand to the universal. We should have been glad if he had explained his conception of the exact difference between them;

clearly, he did not intend to merge poetry in philosophy. Following the lines of his general theory we can assert thus much,—that poetry is akin to philosophy in so far as it aims at expressing the universal; but that, unlike philosophy, it employs the medium of sensuous and imaginative form. In this sense poetry is a concrete philosophy, 'a criticism of life' and of the universe. This is completely true only of the higher imaginative creations, of such poems as those of Homer, Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Dante. In them there is an interpretation of man and of life and of the world; a connected scheme and view of things not systematised or consciously unfolded, but latent, underlying the poet's thought and essential to the unity of the poem. Poets, too, even of an inferior order, who, like Wordsworth, are capable of presenting truly, if not the whole of life, yet certain definite aspects of it in imaginative form, are in their own way philosophers. They embody a consistent and harmonious wisdom of their own.

Between poetry and philosophy there had been an ancient feud. It was otherwise with poetry and history. Here at first there was no opposition. 'Poetry,' says Bacon, 'is feigned history'; much of the poetry of the Greeks might be called authentic history,—true not in precision of detail or in the record of personal adventures, but in its indication of the larger outlines of events and its embodiment

in ideal form of the past deeds of the race. Aristotle himself speaks of the myths as history; the incidents they narrate are facts (*τὰ γινόμενα*); the names of their heroes are 'historical' (*γινόμενα ὀνόματα*) as opposed to fictitious (*πεποιημένα*) names.<sup>1</sup> In this sense Greek tragedy was historical, but its facts were drawn not from recent history or contemporaneous events. The tragedian was the successor of the epic poet, who was himself the earliest historian of the Greek race and the keeper of its archives. Homer, it is true, is not to us as he was to the Greeks the minute and literal chronicler of the Trojan war. We may smile when we think of his lines being quoted and accepted as evidence in the settlement of an international claim. Yet the Homeric poems are still historical documents of the highest value; and that not merely as reflecting the life of the poet's age, the sentiments and manners of the heroic society of which he formed a part, but also as preserving the popular traditions of Greece. Not many years ago it was the fashion to speak of the legendary history of Greece as legend and nothing more. Art and archaeology are every day adding fresh testimony as to its substantial truth. Explorations and excavations are restoring the traditional points of contact between Greece and Asia Minor. Famous dynasties which not long since had been resolved into sun-myths

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ix. 6-7: *supra* pp. 168-70.

again stand out as historical realities. Troy, Tiryns, Mycenae rest on sure foundations ; their past greatness, their lines of princes, their relations with outside states, are not the dreams of poetic imagination. The kernel of truth, which was thought to be non-existent or undiscoverable, is being extracted by the new appliances of the historical method.

The Hellenic people, in short, are found to have perpetuated their history with marvellous fidelity through popular myth. Myth was the unwritten literature of an early people, whose instinctive language was poetry. It was at once their philosophy and their history. It enshrined their unconscious theories of life, their reflections upon things human and divine. It recorded all that they knew about their own past, about their cities and families, the geographical movements of their tribes and the exploits of their ancestors. Myth to the Greeks was not simply what we mean by legend. Aristotle observes that the poet is none the less a poet or maker though the incidents of his poem should chance to be actual events ; for some actual events have that internal stamp of the probable or possible which makes them the subject matter of poetry.<sup>1</sup> Such were the 'actual events' recorded in myth. They lay ready to the poet's hand as an anonymous work, touched by the imagination of an artistic race, many of them hardly needing to be recast from the

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* ix. 9.

poetic mould in which they lay. Truth and fiction were here fused together, and the collective whole was heroic history. This was the idealising medium through which the past became poetical; it afforded that imaginative remoteness which enabled the hearers to escape from present realities. It lifted them into a higher sphere of existence where the distractions of the present were forgotten in the thrilling stories of an age which, though distant, appealed to them by many associations. The Athenians fined Phrynichus for his *Capture of Miletus* not because the event it represented was historical instead of mythical, but because it was recent and painful history. As the fairy-land of fancy was to Spenser

‘The world’s sweet inn from pain and wearisome turmoil,’  
 so the Greeks looked to poetry as a refuge from the }  
 miseries and toilsomeness of life. The comic poet  
 Timocles in explaining the effect of tragedy gives  
 expression to the common sentiment of Greece.  
 ‘The mind, made to forget its own sufferings and  
 touched with the charm of another’s woe, carries \*  
 away instruction and delight.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Timocles Διονυσιάζουσαι: Meineke, *Com. Frag.* ii. 800—

ὁ γὰρ νοῦς τῶν ἰδίων λήθην λαβὼν  
 πρὸς ἄλλοτρίῳ τε ψυχαγωγηθεὶς πάθει  
 μεθ’ ἡδονῆς ἀπῆλθε παιδευθεὶς ἅμα.

Cf. Hesiod *Theog.* 98–103—

εἰ γάρ τις καὶ πένθος ἔχων νεοκηδέϊ θυμῷ  
 αἴζεται κραδίην ἀκαχήμενος, αὐτὰρ αἰοιδὸς

Greek poetry and art with true historic sense did not take the present as an isolated point, but projected it into the past, whose half-effaced outlines were restored by the imagination. Myth was the golden link which bound together the generations. The odes of Pindar are a case in point. The poet, starting from the individual victor in the games, raises the interest above the personal level and beyond the special occasion, by giving historical perspective and background to the event. The victor's fortunes are connected with the annals of his house, with the trials and triumphs of the past. Nor does the poet stop at the deeds of ancestors. The mention of a common ancestor, of a Heracles, will transport him from Lacedaemon to Thessaly. He passes outside the family and the city and sweeps with rapid glance from colony to mother-city, from city to country, from the personal to the Panhellenic interest. Thus the ode is more than an occasional poem, and the theme as it is unfolded acquires a larger meaning. 'The victor is transfigured into a glorious personification of his race, and the present is reflected, magnified, illuminated

Μουσάων θεράπων κλεία προτέρων ἀνθρώπων  
 ὑμνήσῃ, μάκαράς τε θεοὺς οἳ Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσιν,  
 αἰψ' ὃ γε δυσφρονέων ἐπιλήθεται, οὐδέ τι κηδέων  
 μέμνηται· ταχέως δὲ παρέτραπε δῶρα θεάων.

Iambl. *de Mysteriis*, i. 11, p. 39, διὰ δὲ τοῦτο ἔν τε κωμῳδία καὶ τραγῳδία ἀλλότρια πάθη θεωροῦντες ἴσταμεν τὰ οἰκεία πάθη.



in the mirror of the mythic past.'<sup>1</sup> The ode rises by clear ascents from the individual to the universal.

It is this that constitutes Greek idealism. The world of reality and the world of imagination were not for the Greeks separate spheres which stood apart; the breath of poetry kindled the facts of experience and the traditions of the past. The ideal in Greek art was not the opposite of the real, but rather its fulfilment and perfection. Each sprang out of the same soil; the one was the full-blown flower of which the other was the germ.

<sup>1</sup> Gildersleeve, *Pindar*, Intr. p. xviii.

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